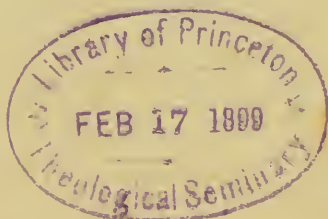
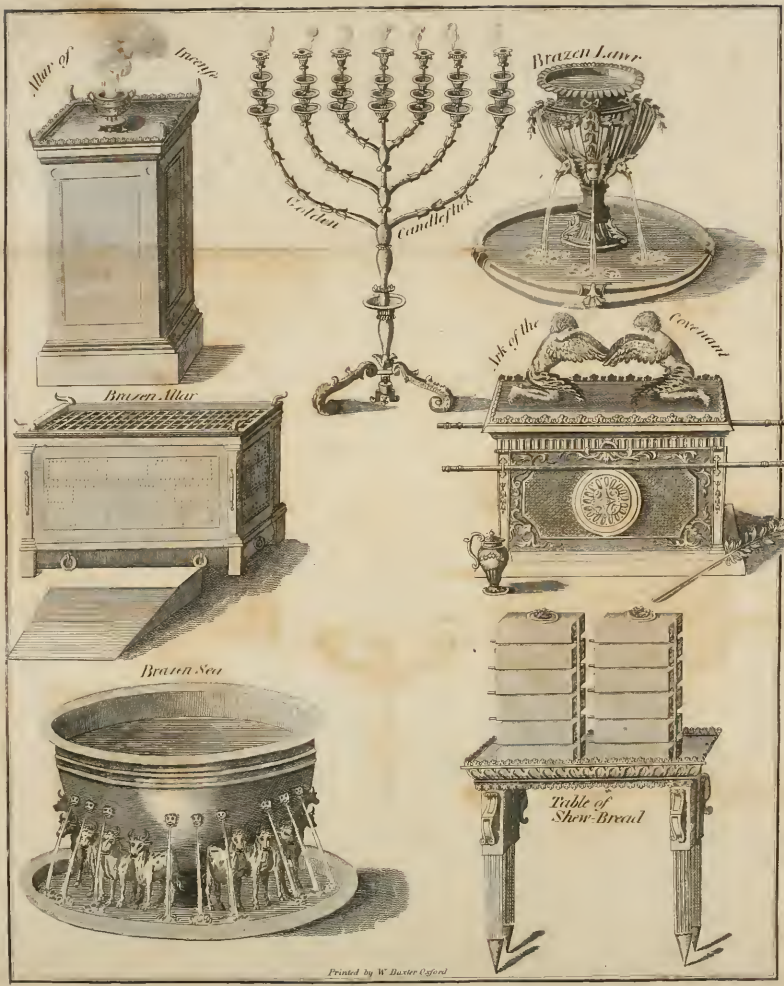


James Wood



Division B5E11
Section C71
No. _____





Altar of

Incense

Brazen Laver

Golden

Candlestick

Brazen Altar

Ark of the

Covenant

Brazen Sea

Table of
Show-Bread

THE
SACRED INTERPRETER;

OR A

PRACTICAL INTRODUCTION

TOWARDS A

BENEFICIAL READING

AND A

THOROUGH UNDERSTANDING

OF THE

HOLY BIBLE.

CONTAINING,

- | | |
|--|---|
| I. A faithful History of the four ancient Monarchies, the Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman, absolutely necessary for the knowledge of the condition of the Jewish people. | IV. An exact Chronology of the holy Scriptures, taken from Archbishop Usher, and Mr. Archdeacon Echarde. |
| II. A general View of the State of the Jewish Church, to the Destruction of Jerusalem. | V. A Dissertation upon Revealed Religion, and an Account of those Divines who have defended it. |
| III. Remarks on the Pentateuch, and the Prophets in the Old Testament, and on the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles in the New; shewing the design and chief scope of each Book. | VI. Difficult texts of Scripture explained; with a recital of such Sacred Mysteries as ought not to be made the subject of human enquiry. |

LIKEWISE

The several parts of the Holy Land are compared with the accounts given thereof by modern Travellers. The whole designed to render the study of the Holy Scriptures more easy and instructive.

BY DAVID COLLYER,

LATE VICAR OF GREAT COXWELL, BERKS.

A NEW EDITION, CORRECTED.

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PREFACE.

THE chief design of compiling this Work was to assist those who are religiously disposed, although unlearned, to read the holy Scriptures with understanding, pleasure, and profit. For which purpose the Author hath endeavoured, by a plain familiar method and style, to be the reader's guide in his searching of the Scriptures, (seeing, as it hath been long ago observed^a, "there is depth enough therein to exercise the wise, and plainness enough to instruct the weak; it being like unto a river, having its shallows and depths, where the lamb may wade, as well as the elephant swim,") particularly by giving an account of some matters which seemed necessary to be considered.

In the first place, such as the four Ancient Monarchies, and the scene of those transactions mentioned in the Old and New Testaments, *viz.* the Land of Canaan, and the City of Jerusalem; and also by an enquiry into the nature of Revelation and Inspiration in general; the grounds on which we believe the holy Bible to be the Word of God; the reasons why the Scriptures ought to be read by the common people, and the manner how they should read them.

Secondly, follows an account of the Titles and Divisions of the Bible; with some general rules for the

^a Greg. Mag. Epist. ad Leandr. c. iv. apud Forbesii instruct. Inst. Hist. Theol. l. iii. c. 30. §. 4.

understanding thereof; together with a concise view of the history of the Jews, and the state of the Church, from the beginning to the final destruction of Jerusalem.

And for the reader's better understanding of every part of the Bible, there are prefixed some general remarks on the Pentateuch, and the Prophets in the Old Testament; as also on the Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistles, in the New; and throughout the reader is shewn the design and chief scope of each book.

Further, because our Saviour hath pronounced *him* to be *the happy person* not only who may *know these things*, but who shall *do them*, such *practical observations* are annexed, as tend to promote religion and prevent mistakes. There is also an addition of the *chief periods* of the Jewish history, after the return from the Babylonian captivity (where the Old Testament ends) to the time of Christ, and thence to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans; together with a brief account of that dreadful judgment, and of the state of the city afterwards.

As to the Chronology of the Old Testament, Archbishop Usher's Annals have been followed; and for the New Testament, Mr. Archdeacon Echard's Tables in his Ecclesiastical History. From whence there is a Chronological Table drawn up in such a method as will fully answer the design proposed, of *instructing the unlearned*, for whose further help the distance of time is set down between every observable occurrence, from the beginning to the destruction of Jerusalem.

The remarks interspersed were made by the author in reading over the primitive writers of the Church,

and of ancient and latter commentators, and a few of the Jewish Rabbies, (particularly the most judicious of them, Maimonides, according to Buxtorf's translation, with others, as they are cited by Hottinger and Dr. Lightfoot,) as also the works of modern divines who have defended revealed religion.

Our *literary notes* contain no other quotations than what are absolutely necessary either to *confirm*, or more fully to *illustrate*, what they refer to, in case these papers should chance to fall into the hands of some person more conversant in books than *those* are for whom they are chiefly designed; particularly any of the *younger students in divinity*, who may greatly improve by the remarks of others, and who are desired to excuse a few repetitions, which may be of use to common readers, and the explanations of some useful terms, which could not well be omitted, and without which they would not be intelligible to the vulgar.

The subject, indeed, is the most noble, and worthy the pursuit of the utmost skill and diligence. And the Author humbly hopes he shall not any where be found guilty of misguiding the reader by a wrong interpretation of God's holy Word. What he comforts himself with is, that as his office engages him frequently to conclude our holy Liturgy in public with *granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting*: so he can hope for the benefit of the same petition as used on this occasion in private; and that a sincere desire as well as honest endeavour of assisting his brethren to *search the Scriptures* with delight and profit, may in some measure excuse the defects either of learning or judgment, both with God and man.

Whatever difficulties we may meet with, most certainly great are our encouragements to a constant, diligent perusal of the holy Bible, above all other books whatsoever: thereby we converse with God himself, and his Son Jesus Christ; with the ancient Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles: we improve in the most excellent divine knowledge, such as will forward our admission into heaven, and accompany us^b thither: that true *wisdom which is from above*, and will make us *wise unto salvation*, procure for us riches which fade not away, with that glory, honour, and pleasure, which earthly pomps, possessions, and enjoyments, (all the most ample rewards of other studies,) are not so much as faint resemblances or shadows of, and which shall never be diminished nor taken from us.

Where any part of holy Scripture is explained in general, or according to such doctrine or practice of which some readers may not have the same opinion with the Author, he hopes it will appear, that if there be not enough said to *convince*, there is nothing that can justly *offend*; any unprejudiced searcher after truth. What relates to the Jewish history, after their return from the Babylonian captivity, is extracted from the Maccabees and Josephus; of which it may not be improper to give such readers, who may be unacquainted therewith, a short account.

Of the two first books of Maccabees, the first hath been most esteemed, as being the more accurate history, though written by an uncertain author, and after the spirit of prophecy ceased in the church of the Jews; and therefore was not received into their canon,

^b Discamus in terris, quarum nobis scientia perseveret in cœlo.
Hieronym. Epist. ad Paulinum.

nor owned as such by Christ and his Apostles : nor did the primitive Christians receive these apocryphal books as strictly *canonical*; however, they allowed them to be read in churches, as containing *divers matters* which tend to edification, and (what is most to our purpose) relied on the truth of the history therein recorded^c.

As for Josephus^d, he was a learned and religious Jew, descended from the priestly family, and born in the year of Christ thirty-seven, that is, about four years after our Saviour's ascension into heaven. When the Jewish wars against the Romans broke out, he took up arms, and was a governor and captain in Galilee, and bravely defended his country, till at length he was taken prisoner ; but being afterwards released, when the wars were over, he wrote the history of them at large. Soon after he composed the *Antiquities of the Jews*, in ten books, from the time of their being first a people and nation ; from whence that account of the Jewish affairs is chiefly taken which is not mentioned in the holy Bible, and more especially concerning their

^c Gerhardi loc. com. de Sacr. Scriptura, ed. Jenæ, 1622, sect. 7. Beveregii Codex Can. Eccles. Prim. lib. ii. c. 9. §. 3. Du Pin's Canon, &c. Prelim. Dis. sect. 2. and Dean Prideaux's Connect. part ii. b. 3. sub anno 166.

^d See the first discourse at the beginning of L'Estrange's edition concerning Josephus. N. B. For the use of the English reader, the quotations out of Josephus are for the most part according to that version ; but compared with, and sometimes brought nearer to, the original of Dr. Hudson's Oxford edition, wherein the number of the chapters in our notes agree with those in L'Estrange's edition.

The quotations out of the ecclesiastical historians, as Eusebius, Socrates, &c. are according to the English translation, Cambridge, 1683, with Valesius's notes, compared with the Greek edition of Geneva, 1612.

dreadful destruction ; wherein Josephus was a sorrowful eye-witness, and upon which he declared himself to be of opinion, that *God had forsaken his nation, and was gone over to the Romans*°.

Two cautions here seem necessary to be given to the reader concerning the holy Scriptures ; *viz.* first, where they speak only in *general*, we should not be over curious to dive into *particulars* which God hath not revealed ; such as *the manner how the creatures were at first formed ; the application of some general prophecies*, the design whereof does not appear in the Prophets themselves, nor hath been explained by the Holy Spirit in the New Testament, and which therefore cannot be known till their accomplishment ; the *distinct nature of God*, and the Holy Trinity ; *the manner of uniting the human to the divine nature of Christ ; God's eternal decrees ; the particular manner of the Resurrection, and of reuniting the soul and body ; the season and method of the conversion of the Jews ;* and such like. In respect to which, let us be wise to *sobriety*, and not *exercise ourselves in things too high and wonderful for us ;* but be content with what God hath thought fit to *reveal*, and make a proper use of such his divine Revelation. Where the Scripture hath not a tongue to speak, it is not our business to enquire ; for that would minister questions which can never be resolved, and hinder us from godly edifying, and from pursuing the main design of God's holy word, which tends to the increase of *faith and charity, out of a pure heart and a good conscience :* from which, as the Apostle complained in his time, *some having swerved, have turned aside unto vain*

° Wars, b. iii. chap. 14.

jangling. On the other hand, it is certainly safe for us to be ignorant of what God hath not revealed.

We can never hope to attain the knowledge of divine matters, so as to be inflamed with the love and expectancy of them, without a pure heart and fervent prayer.

The Penman of the Scriptures is Jehovah, the subject is holy, and therefore we are not to indulge impure thoughts, nor harbour any wilful sin, whilst we read, or would understand and profit by them; for *without holiness no man shall see, or know, the Lord; but if any man do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God*. Nor can we expect the Divine assistance, without prayer to him who is the *Author of every good and perfect gift*; and in this case more particularly it is he *who commanded the light to shine out of darkness that must shine in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God*. Seeing therefore we lack this heavenly wisdom, we are *to ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not*. And we cannot better pray to him for this purpose than by that divine form which his Son hath taught us, (*Our Father, &c.*) concluding with this excellent Collect of our Liturgy.

Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning, grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that, by patience and comfort of thy holy word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE
SACRED INTERPRETER.

PART I.

CHAP. I.

OF SOME MATTERS NECESSARY TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE
FIRST PLACE.



SECTION I.

*An Account of the Four Ancient Monarchies ; necessary for
the understanding of the state and condition of the Jews,
and thereby of the holy Scriptures.*

AS in the several ages of the world a great many particular countries were governed by their respective kings, so there were four principal or great monarchies, which succeeded each other, and which had the chiefest authority and power, and the largest dominions in subjection under them: in the histories of which, those who read the unexpected and most surprising success on the one hand, and at other times the no less wonderful disappointments, cannot but observe the providence of God, both in the first establishment of, and also in the periods put to, each of them, and the changes made from the one to the other when the Divine pleasure had once been accomplished, and the ends brought about for which they were at first supported, and afterwards discontinued ^a.

^a So visible also, in other ages, was the hand of God in the subversion of the Greek Church, (which was become very corrupt in faith and practice,) and in the conquest of the Grecian emperors, at the first enterprised by a small number of undisciplined Arabians, or Saracens, under Mahomet and his successors, the caliphs, till at length they became masters of Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, and extended their conquests as far as Persia. See Ockley's History of the Saracens, part i. To these afterwards, the Turks, another fierce nation of people, opposed

These principal monarchies were, the Assyrian, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman.

First, the Assyrian, founded by Nimrod ^b, about the year of the world 1771, who had his seat at Babel, or Babylon, on the river Euphrates, whence the country was called Babylonia; and also at Nineveh, so called from his son Ninus, on the river Hiddekel, the same with Tigris ^c. This empire continued above fourteen hundred years, till a conspiracy being entered into by Arbaces and Belesis, the deputy-governors of Media and Babylon, against Sardanapalus, an effeminate prince, a ^d division was made of the monarchy in the year of the world 3257; when Arbaces, governor of Media, called in Scripture Tiglathpileser ^e, one of the chief conspirators, seized upon Media and Persia, and the neighbouring provinces; and also, upon Sardanapalus' destroying himself in a funeral pile at Nineveh, he was owned king of Assyria, and resided at Nineveh. Belesis, the other of the conspirators, governor of Babylon, called Nabonassar, and in Scripture Baladan ^f, made himself king of Babylon, in Chaldea; and there his successors resided for sixty-six years, till the year 3323; when the seed-royal failing at Babylon, Esarhaddon, then king of Assyria, obtained Babylon too, and reunited it to the ancient Assyrian monarchy ^g, which is also called by the name of the Babylonian or Chaldean monarchy, from those kings who kept their court at Babylon, a city of Chaldea, as those especially did who succeeded Esarhaddon. This monarchy is reckoned to have lasted near seventeen hundred years, either in a larger or smaller extent, from the first beginning thereof by Nimrod, to its period by Cyrus.

Many of the Assyrian and Babylonian kings were as scourges in the hands of God, to chastise both the kingdoms of Judah and Israel for their sins: such as Pul, who is sup-

themselves, till at length they became their masters, (having embraced the Mahometan religion, which they found so agreeable to their own tempers and manners,) and transferred the imperial authority to themselves.

^b Gen. x. Usher, *A. M.* 1771. ^c Gen. x. 11. the marginal reading. Bochartus apud Poole et Patrick in loc. ^d Usher, *A. M.* 3257. ^e 2 Kings xv. 29. ^f 2 Kings xx. 12. ^g Usher, *A. M.* 3323.

posed to be the father of Sardanapalus ^h, and Tiglathpileser, who subdued and carried into captivity a great many from the northern parts of the kingdom of Israel, as about Galilee and Gilead ⁱ; and Salmaneser, and after him Esarhaddon, made captive the rest of the ten tribes ^k: and at length Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, carried away also the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which is called the Babylonian captivity ^l.

The second monarchy was the Persian, or of the Medes and Persians, established by Cyrus, the son of Cambyses, king of the Persians in the year of the world 3466; which continued about two hundred and eight years, till Alexander put an end to it by conquering the Persians.

This Cyrus was chosen general of the Medes and Persians, in their war against the Assyrians, or Babylonians. At length he took the city of Babylon, Belshazzar, the king thereof, being slain. For the present Cyrus left the city and kingdom of Babylon to his uncle Cyaxares, the king of Media, called in Scripture Darius the Median ^m. But after his death Cyrus had the possession of the whole eastern empire, his father Cambyses, king of Persia, being also dead; so that now Cyrus was the first Persian monarch in the year of the world 3468. He released the Jews from the Babylonian captivity, and his successors permitted them to settle again in their own land, as in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

The third monarchy was the Grecian, founded by Alexander the Great, king of Macedon in Greece, after he had overthrown the Persian army, in the year 3674. This monarchy lasted about three hundred years, till Augustus was made emperor of Rome. Alexander being dead, each of his captains seized on what share they could of his vast dominions; of which four kingdoms were the most considerable, *viz.* Egypt, Syria, Greece, and the Lesser Asia, or Pergamus, which continued till the Romans subdued them. Whilst Alexander lived, the Jews were permitted their own laws and

^h 2 Kings xv. 19. 1 Chron. xv. 26.
6, 24, compared with Ezra iv, 2, 10.

ⁱ 2 Kings xv. 29.

^k 2 Kings xvii.

^l 2 Kings xxiv.

^m Dan. v. 31.

religion in peace; but under his successors, especially the kings of Egypt and Syria, they often suffered much, though they were sometimes favoured by them.

The fourth monarchy was the Roman, established in the year 3976, when Octavius, afterwards surnamed Augustus, had the sole administration of the Roman government conferred on him, about twenty-seven years before Christ; for the better understanding whereof it may be here observed, that at the first the Romans had been governed by kings, and afterwards for many ages in the form of a commonwealth, wherein there were senators or magistrates, (somewhat like unto our parliament-men,) as also two chief officers, yearly chosen, called consuls. But at length discords and factions among themselves, and the ambition of some of their generals, occasioned civil wars, which were managed chiefly between two great men, who headed the rest, *viz.* Julius Cæsar and Pompey. Such was the ambitious spirit of these two, that it was remarked of them, that neither could Pompey endure an equal, nor Cæsar a superior. At length it came to a battle in the plains of Pharsalia, in Thessaly, where Pompey being beaten, fled into Egypt; but there, instead of being succoured, he was basely murdered. Cæsar, being quit of his rival, managed his interest so at Rome, that he was by degrees made perpetual dictator. The dictator among the Romans was an officer having absolute power for a short time on great and urgent occasions; but Cæsar being made perpetual, put an endⁿ thereby to the old form of government, and the chief authority of the senate, and became in effect as sole emperor; but he was soon after slain in the senate-house by some who affected the ancient liberty of the commonwealth. This occasioned new disturbances, and a new civil war between Octavius, called also Octavianus, the nephew and adopted son of Julius Cæsar, and Anthony, one of the consuls; but after some time, Octavius, partly by his wit and policy, and partly by his valour and good success, with some mixture of severity towards his opponents, having vanquished

ⁿ Dion. Cassius, l. 51. ad initium, τότε πρωτον ὁ Καισαρ το κρητος παν μονος ισχιν.

Anthony, gained so much upon the senate, as to have the whole authority put into his hands, to do whatsoever he pleased^o; and also a new title conferred on him, which was that of Augustus; a term, which in their language was wont to be applied to what was sacred to their gods, and imported somewhat majestic and venerable above the common state of human affairs^p: which authority and title he enjoyed to his death, as all his successors the Roman emperors did for many ages following, together with that of Cæsar, from Julius Cæsar, before mentioned, who adopted him; it being the custom^q of the Romans, that the person adopted should take the name of the one who adopted him. Hence the Roman emperor is often in Scripture called Cæsar and Augustus^r.

Among other nations, the Jews became subject to the Romans. In this emperor Augustus' time there was an universal peace, and Jesus Christ, the Messiah and Saviour, was born into the world.

Farther, as to these four chief monarchies, one particular phrase is to be taken notice of, which expresses their authority and dominion, as if it extended over the whole world, according to the lofty way of speaking, usual in the eastern countries: thus * it is said of the Assyrians and Babylonians, that *they made the world a wilderness*; and † Nebuchadnezzar, *the king to all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth*^u; and Cyrus the Persian says, that God had given him *all the kingdoms of the earth*^v. Accordingly, among the modern Persians, their king is styled the *companion of the sun*^w; and no doubt, together with the imperial power and dominion, the said lofty title came from the Babylonians and Persians to the Greeks, and so to the Romans; for of the Grecian monarchy it is said^x, that it should bear rule *over all the earth*^y;

^o Αυτοκρατωρ οντας, Dion. Cassius, l. 53. p. 591.

^p Dion. Cassius, l. 53.

p. 581. πλειον τι η κατ' ανθρωπουσιν, and which he says the Greeks interpret by σεβαστον, venerable, or to be adored.

^q Dion. Cassius, l. 46.

^r As Luke

ii. 1. and iii. 1. and Acts xxv. 8, 21, &c.

^s Isaiah xiv. 17, 25.

^t Dan. iv. 1.

^u So also Dan. ii. 38. and iii. 29.

^v Ezra i. 2.

^w Tavernier of the isle

Formosa, chap. viii.

^x Dan. ii. 39.

^y There is an inscription in one of

and as for the Roman^z, *there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed*^a; so the Gospel was to be preached in all the world, that is, chiefly up and down the Roman empire, before the destruction of Jerusalem^b.

SECTION II.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF CANAAN, THE LAND OF THE JEWS.

(See the Map.)

FIRST,

Of the ancient inhabitants before the Israelites.

AFTER the flood, the world was peopled or inhabited by Noah and his family. This Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet. His son Ham had four sons, of which the youngest was Canaan. Now the first inhabitants of the land of the Jews were chiefly those who descended from Canaan; thence it was called the *land of Canaan*; and it was divided into several parts, and those called after the names of Canaan and his sons^c. Upon the sea-coast dwelt the Palestines or Philistines, who came from some of the descendants of Mizraim, Canaan's brother^d; whence, in after ages, the whole country was called Palestine. It contains in length about two hundred miles, in breadth eighty^e.

Secondly, In the time of Joshua, when the children of Israel were to take possession of the land, there were seven nations or petty kingdoms in it^f, *viz.* the Hittites, Gergashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites; of which the Amorites had extended their conquests beyond Jordan, and having overcome the Moabites, placed themselves in their country, between the rivers Arnon

Constantine's medals, like the Persian style afore mentioned, *Soli invicto Comiti*.
Numismata Adolphi Oeconis, p. 461. ^z Luke ii. 1. ^a Οικουμένη, and, according to their own historians, *Imperium orbis terrarum*.

^b Matt. xxiv. 14. Rom. i. 8. ^c For which see Gen. x. 15—20. ^d Gen. x. 13, 14. ^e Heylin.

^f Reckoned up Deut. vii. 1.



Alexandria

DESERT

Topesiris

Maree Oboth

Old Canal

Labyrinthus

Feinur

DESERT

F

HEP

IA

English Statute Miles
0 20 40 60 80 100

Printed by W. Baxter Oxford

A
NEW MAP
OF
CANAAN, EGYPT,
AND
PARTS ADJACENT



Printed by W. Haxton Oxford

From the Original

and Jabbok, and drove the Moabites to the south of Arnon^g. These seven nations were the people which the children of Israel were to root out, and to settle themselves in their places; as they did for the most part; though some of the old inhabitants remained still, to be as thorns in their sides^h; as they of Tyre and Sidon, and the Jebusites, who dwelt in or about Jebus or Jerusalem, and the Philistines, a strong and warlike people on the sea-coast, by whom God afterwards often punished the Israelites, when they sinned against him. On the west was the Mediterranean sea, called the West sea. On the north-west was Canaan, strictly so called, or Phœnicia. On the north and north-east were mount Libanus and Syria. On the south were the Edomites or Idumæans, the posterity of Esau, Jacob's brother, (who, for selling his birthright for some red pottageⁱ, was named Edom, that is, in the Hebrew, *Red*;) among whom lived the Amalekites, so called, properly, because descended from ^k Amalek, grandson of Esau^l. On the other side of the Dead sea were the Moabites, who proceeded from Moab, one of Lot's sons, being bounded by the river Arnon. Beyond them, south-eastward, were the Midianites, the descendants of Midian, one of the sons of Abraham, by Keturah. Beyond Arnon, northwards, were the Amorites, between the river Arnon on the south, and Jabbok on the north. Beyond them, to the north, was the kingdom of Basan, &c. On the east side of the river Arnon were the Ammonites, who descended from Ammon, the younger of Lot's sons.

Thirdly, When the country was subdued by the children of Israel, it was divided into twelve parts, like so many provinces or shires, called *tribes*, according to the number of Jacob's twelve sons^m; only Levi's family, who were to attend on the priest's office and holy rites, without any worldly incumbrance, had, besides the first-fruits, and their share

^g Numb. xxi. 24. ^h Judges i. 27. and chap. ii. 20. to the end of the chapter.

ⁱ Gen. xxv. 30.

^k It is more probable that the Amalekites were descended, as some Arabian writers affirm, from Amalk or Amalek, the son of Ham, and grandson of Noah. See Newton on Prophecy.

^l Gen. xxxvi. 12.

^m Josh. xiii. to chap. xxi.

of the offerings, the tenth of the product of all the countryⁿ, and no distinct part or lot, but had towns allotted them, dispersed among all the tribes, which towns had their suburbs, and some land round about them^o. And Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, having been adopted by Jacob, were made heads of tribes^p, and they two are reckoned instead of Joseph and Levi; so the twelve tribes were, Judah, Benjamin, Simeon, Dan, Asher, Naphthali, Zebulon, Issachar, Gad, Reuben, Ephraim, and Manasseh; of which Reuben's and Gad's and half Manasseh's tribe had their part beyond Jordan^q. Dan was reckoned the utmost ancient town northwards of Canaan, as Beersheba was southwards: hence that saying in Scripture, *from Dan to Beersheba*, that is, from one end of the land to the other.

Fourthly, When Jeroboam made the breach^r, four hundred and seventy-six years after their first settlement, the kingdom was divided, and one part, which adhered to Rehoboam, Solomon's son, was called the kingdom of Judah, consisting of two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, the chief city whereof was Jerusalem; and the part that Jeroboam reigned over was called the kingdom of Israel, and consisted of the remaining ten tribes, of which Samaria was the chief city.

Fifthly, When the Assyrians, about two hundred and fifty-four years after the division above mentioned, had carried captive those of the children of Israel, or the ten tribes, they placed strangers in the chiefest part of the country, *viz.* Samaria; some remains of the ten tribes still continuing in the northern parts of Galilee; of which afterwards.

Sixthly, When the Babylonians, a little above a hundred and thirty years after the destruction of the kingdom of Israel, had carried away captive the people of the kingdom of Judah, their part of the country lay desolate and uninhabited till the Jews returned from their captivity.

Sevently, After the Jews returned from the Babylonian captivity, and so in the time of the second temple, and in the

ⁿ Numb. xviii. 21. ^o Numb. xxxv. Josh. xxi. ^p Gen. xlvi. ^q Numb. xxxii.
^r 1 Kings xii.

days of Christ, the chief part of their country, on this side Jordan, was divided into three distinct provinces; as Judæa being the south part, Samaria about the middle, and Galilee the north part: of these Judæa was the most renowned, in which was the city of Jerusalem, and therein the temple. Samaria was where the Cuthites or Samaritans dwelt, whose ancestors the king of Assyria sent thither, when he had carried away captive the ten tribes of the children of Israel^p. Upon this account these Samaritans were odious to the Jews. Galilee was divided into the Upper, that lay most northward, called Galilee of the Gentiles, because it was next them, or nearly encompassed by them, and possibly inhabited by Gentiles as well as Jews; and the Lower Galilee, that was next to Samaria. In Galilee, on the sea-coast, was Cæsarea, a city built by Herod, and made the metropolis or head city of the province of Palestine by the Romans, and the residence of the Roman governors of Judæa, such as Felix and Festus, who are mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. In the same country was Nazareth, the place where Joseph and Mary lived, and our Lord Christ, till his manifestation of himself: whence his followers were called Nazarenes. Here also were Bethsaida and Capernaum, which places are so often mentioned in the New Testament for Christ's resorting so much to them, and teaching the people there. Near this sea was also the mount or hill on which Christ sat when he preached the sermon^q. Again, Galilee was the country out of which Christ chose twelve Apostles, and which he was wont much to frequent. Here also he shewed himself alive after his resurrection. And yet this part of the country, and the people in it, were despised by the rest of the Jews, as rude and unlearned. Their very speech was broad, and differed from others^r. Hence Peter was discovered^s, that he was a Galilean, for his speech betrayed him; and they were generally esteemed a barbarous and rough people, remarkable neither for religion nor good manners; so that the Jews and Gentiles

^p 2 Kings xvii. 24.
in Matt. c. 87.

^q Matt. v. vi. and vii.
^s Matt. xxvi. 73.

^r Lightfoot. Centuria Chorog.

thought that they could not reproach our Saviour and his Apostles more than by calling them Galileans^u. Hence appears the humility of Christ, in choosing such a place to live in; and his divine power too, who founded his church, and converted the world by such instruments as were most unlikely in themselves to produce any thing either great or good^x.

As for that part of the country which lay on the east side of Jordan, formerly the seat of the Amorites, and after them of the tribes of Reuben and Gad, it was called Peræa, or the country beyond Jordan; on the north side of which was Iturea and Trachonitis. The bordering country on the south had the same name as formerly, namely, Idumæa.

The river Jordan runs along this country from north to south^y. “As you pass along the plains of Jericho, towards this river, within about a furlong of it, there runs along a small descent, which you may fitly call the first or outermost bank; as far as which the river does, or at least anciently did, overflow at some seasons of the year, *viz.* at the time of harvest^z. After having descended the outermost bank, you go about a furlong upon a level strand, before you come to the immediate bank of the river. This second bank is beset with bushes and trees, such as tamarisk, willows, oleanders, &c. that you can see no water till you have made your way through them. In this thicket anciently (and the same is reported of it at this day) several sorts of wild beasts were wont to harbour themselves, whose being washed out of their covert by the overflowings of the river, gave occasion to that allusion, Jer. xlix. 19. *He shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan*^a.” This river, when it has run down as far as the Lower Galilee, opens into a broad water, *viz.* into the sea of Galilee, which is called also the sea of Tiberias, and the lake of Genesareth, because on the banks thereof was

^u See John i. 46. and chap. vii. 52. ^x Read 1 Cor. i. 27, &c. ^y The head or source thereof is at a place called Phiala, where the water stands always at a stay, the bason brimful; whence it passes under ground to Panion, and there comes forth again. See Josephus, W. book iii. chap. 18. ^z Josh. iii. 15.

^a Maundrell's Journey to Jerusalem.

the city of Tiberias, and a tract of land called Genesareth. It is reckoned to be about twelve or fifteen miles in length, and five or six in breadth^b. Josephus writes, "The breadth thereof is forty furlongs, and besides those a hundred more (or a hundred and forty) in length^c; and that it has in it^d great variety of fish, which, for taste and shape, are not to be found any where else." Beyond this the river grows narrow, and runs along to the very south end of the country, falling at last into the Dead sea, where of old was Sodom and Gomorrah, which were consumed by fire and brimstone thrown down from heaven.

Sometimes there is mention made in Scripture of a wilderness or desert. But the deserts among the Jews were not places altogether uninhabited, but as with us the country is in respect to cities or principal towns, so were the deserts in the Jews' land, namely, places more open and common, where were hills and woods, and some towns here and there^e: such was the wilderness of Judæa^f, and the wilderness of Paran, where Nabal dwelt^g. A judicious modern author says of the wilderness of St. John Baptist, "A wilderness it is called, as being very rocky and mountainous, but it is well cultivated, and produces plenty of corn, and vines, and olive trees^h."

Again, we often read in Scripture of caves and dens in the mountains and rocks; some of which were large, such as thoseⁱ in which Obadiah *hid an hundred men of the Lord's prophets, by fifty in a cave*. The five kings discomfited by Joshua *hid themselves in a cave in Makkedah^k*; and David *escaped to the cave Adullam^l*. These caves and dens seem to have been cut out of the rocks and mountains for a shelter and refuge in time of war; and it is probable the Canaanites, a warlike and gigantic people, might have digged many of them, and that the Israelites increased the number. Thus we find, that when the hand of Midian prevailed against

^b Thevenot's Travels, part i. b. ii. chap. 55. ^c Josephus, W. b. iii. chap. 9.
 Hudson's edit, sect. vii. ^d Ibid. b. iii. chap. 18. ^e Lightfoot, Horæ in
 Matt. iii. 1. ^f Matt. iii. 1. and Luke i. 80. ^g 1 Sam. xxv. 1, 2. ^h Maun-
 drell's Travels. ⁱ 1 Kings xviii. 13. ^k Josh. x. 16. ^l 1 Sam. xxii. 1.

Israel, the children of Israel made them dens that *are in the mountains, and caves, and strong holds*^m. And the people in distress did *hide themselves in caves, and rocks, and in pits*ⁿ.

Concerning the fruitfulness of this country : God himself promised the Israelites^o, that it was *a good land, a land of brooks of waters, and fountains, a land of wheat and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, a land of oil olive, and honey*. Josephus^p says of it, “ In both the Galilees there are fat and fruitful pastures, and they are planted with all sorts of trees, so as to entice even those who are no great lovers of husbandry : there are cities and villages in abundance, by reason of the fruitfulness of the soil, &c. The country of Samaria is wonderfully fruitful : there is great plenty of grass, and it yields a large increase of milk. Judæa, like Samaria, is mountainous and rich, fit for husbandry, and well stored with trees.”

As to the condition of it now, the forementioned late ingenious and judicious traveller gives the following^q account; *viz.* that he has travelled from Acra, or Accha, called anciently Accho^r; and in after-times Ptolemais, through part of the tribes of Ashur, Zebulon, Manasses, and Ephraim, for about twenty-one hours’ journey, that is, sixty-three miles, at three miles by the hour ; it was for the most part very fertile, but uncultivated, only serving the Arabs, who are the chief possessors of the country, for pasturage ; but that “ all along one day’s journey, before he came to Jerusalem, and also as far as he could see round, instead of delicious plains he had before passed through, he discovered a quite different face from what it had before, presenting nothing to the view in most places but naked rocks, mountains, and precipices^s ; at the sight of which pilgrims are apt to be astonished, finding the country in such an inhospitable condition, concerning

^m Judges vi. 2. ⁿ 1 Sam. xiii. 6. ^o Deut. viii. 7, 8. ^p Book iii. ch. 2. Gr. ch. 3. ^q Maundrell’s Travels. Thevenot’s Travels, part i. book ii. ch. 54, and 56. Mr. Sandys says of the country near Hebron, “ We passed through the most pregnant and pleasant valley that ever eye beheld.” See his Travels, book iii. p. 150. ^r Judges i. 31. ^s Maundrell, March 25.

whose pleasantness and plenty they had before formed in their minds such high ideas, from the description given of it in the word of God ; but it is obvious for any one to observe, that those rocks and hills must have been anciently covered with earth, and cultivated, and made to contribute to the maintenance of the inhabitants. For the husbandring of those mountains, their manner was to gather up stones, and place them in several lines along the sides of the hill, in form of a wall : by such borders they supported the mould from tumbling, or being washed down, and formed many beds of excellent soil, rising gradually one above another from the bottom to the top of the mountains. Of this form of culture you see evident footsteps wherever you go, in all the mountains of Palestine. Than the plain country nothing can be more fruitful, whether for the production of corn or cattle, and consequently of milk. The hills, though improper for all cattle except goats, yet being disposed into such beds, as before described, served very well to bear corn, melons, gourds, and cucumbers, and such like garden-stuff, which makes the principal food of those countries for several months in the year. The great plain joining to the Dead sea, which, by reason of its saltness, might be thought un-serviceable both for cattle, corn, olives, and vines, had yet its proper usefulness for the nourishment of bees, and for the fabric of honey ; of which Josephus gives us his testimony †. And I have reason to believe it, because, when I was there, I perceived, in many places, a smell of honey and wax as strong as if one had been in an apiary : why then might not this country maintain the vast number of its inhabitants, being every part so productive, either of milk, corn, wine, oil, or honey, which are the principal food of eastern nations ; the constitution of their bodies, and the nature of their clime, inclining to a more abstemious diet than we use in England and other colder regions " ? " Such like was the provision of Judith, *wine, oil, parched corn, figs, and fine bread* *.

† In his Wars of the Jews, book v. chap. 4.

‡ Maundrell. To the same purpose Morrison's Itinerary, part i. book iii. chap. 1. near the end thereof.

* Judith x. 5.

The temper and employment of the Jews, when in their own land, is thus set forth by their countryman Josephus^y; “We live,” says he, “in a midland country, and for the matter of trade and ramble, we never trouble our heads upon either of these accounts: our cities lie remote from the sea, the soil fruitful, and well-dressed and cultivated: our greatest care is for the maintenance and education of our children, and to have them trained up to piety, and in obedience to the laws of our country. And this we reckon the main business of our lives. We have a peculiar way of living to ourselves, which gives us to understand, that, in time past, we had no communication with the Greeks, as the Egyptians and Phœnicians had; neither did our predecessors make inroads upon their neighbours, for the enlarging of their estates.”

SECTION III.

A description of the city of Jerusalem, and the adjacent places.

THE city^z was not built on a plain, but there were two principal mounts or hills in it, and valleys between them^a; as, *first*, Mount Zion, which was the highest, and took up most of the south part of the city; this was secured by nature with deep valleys, and high and steep rocks, and so strongly fortified by the Jebusites, the old inhabitants of that part of the land, that although the Israelites had taken the other part of Jerusalem^b, yet they could not gain this, or, however, not hold it^c, till the time of King David, who took it, and thereon built a palace for himself, and also set up the tabernacle, and placed the ark of God in it^d. Hence these

^y Contra Apion, book i. not far from the beginning. ^z Of Jerusalem, probably so called from Salem, Josephus, W. book vii. chap. 18. (of which Melchizedek was king, Gen. xiv. 18.) and Jebus, from the Jebusites, who possessed it afterwards. Josh. xv. 63. Hence named Jebusalem, and for the easier sound's sake, Jerusalem. Adricomii Descript. Num. 1. Dr. Wells's Hist. Geograph. of the Old Testament, vol. iii. chap. 2. ^a Josephus, W. book vi. chap. 6.
^b Judges i. 8. ^c Joshua xv. 63. ^d 2 Sam. v. vi.

expressions, *My holy hill of Zion*; and, *God will save Zion*, &c. it being the place where the ark of God was, and consequently where he did especially manifest his presence.

Secondly, The other mount was Moriah, on the east part of the city, on which Abraham designed to sacrifice his son, and on which afterwards Solomon built the famous temple of God^e. Each of these mountains was walled about, besides the walling round the whole city. Josephus in his description^f mentions Acra as one of the hills; but it is observed, that *Moriah* in Hebrew is of the same importance with *Acra* in Greek, each in its respective language denoting *high*; and accordingly, that the land of Moriah^g is rendered^h *the high land*, and *the land of vision*, or *prospect*ⁱ, from *Raah*, to see, or have a prospect.

Other mounts, or hills, there were near the city, but without it; as, *first*, Mount Olivet, or the Mount of Olives, the higher part of which was about a mile distant from Jerusalem eastwards, whither Christ often resorted^k. On this mount was Bethany, where Lazarus and his sisters Martha and Mary lived^l, where Christ frequently vouchsafed his presence, and whither he led his disciples when he ascended up into heaven.

At the foot of this Mount Olivet was Gethsemane, where Christ prayed when he entered on his passion^m. Here also was Bethphage, whence our Lord set out at his triumphant riding into Jerusalemⁿ. Between this Mount Olivet and Jerusalem there was a valley, and likewise the brook Cedron, over which Christ went the evening before his passion.

Secondly, On the west side of Jerusalem northwards was Mount Calvary, or Golgotha, where our Lord was crucified. And thus much for the account of Canaan, as may be necessary for the understanding of the holy Scriptures.

^e 2 Chron. iii. 1. ^f Josephus, W. book vi. ch. 6. Morrison's Itiner. part i. book iii. chap. 2. Dr. Wells's Hist. Geog. of the Old Testament, vol. iii. chap. 2.
^g Gen. xxii. 2. ^h By the Septuagint. ⁱ By the vulgar Latin; see Dr. Wells in Moriah. ^k Luke xxii. 39. ^l John xi. 1. ^m Matt. xxvi. 36.
ⁿ Matt. xxi.

SECTION IV.

A brief disquisition concerning Revelation in general.

REASON and nature alone are no sure guides in matters of religion: the cause is, the corruption of human nature, and the uncertainty of our reasoning; for “that which hath been at some times, and in some countries, accounted virtuous and lawful, the same, at other times, and in other countries, hath been condemned as vicious and abominable, as the wise heathen observed^a;” nor can it be otherwise, considering the passions of men, and their prejudices from education, interest, or custom. Again, we find by experience, that when human knowledge was very highly improved among the wisest and most discerning of the heathen world, how deformed and corrupt the frame of their religion was, and how uncertain and perplexed were their notions of it: and although they generally agreed in a sense of the guilt of sin, and the dangerous consequence of it; yet their apprehensions were as dark and confused, as they were various and disagreeing with each other, concerning the method of procuring an atonement and reconciliation. It is therefore very becoming the wisdom and goodness of the Creator to discover his will so far, that mankind might be taught what is good and evil, how he would be worshipped, and on what condition reconciled to them.

Accordingly God thought fit to communicate himself to our first parents^b. And Cain complained that he should be driven out, and hid from the face and presence of God, and so deprived of the divine communications^c. Afterwards God revealed himself to Noah, whom he made a preacher of righteousness to the world^d, both before and after the flood; whose doctrine must be known to all the inhabitants of the earth, being all of one language, before they were dispersed. In after-times, Abraham dwelt among the Chaldeans, and

^a Diog. Laert. in Vita Pyronis circa medium.
and iii. 8, &c.

^c Gen. iv. 14, 16.

^b Gen. i. 28. and ii. 16, 17.

^d 2 Pet. ii. 5.

in Mesopotamia; they journeyed through Canaan; so that he and his sons Ishmael and Isaac, whom he carefully instructed in the true religion^e, were, no doubt, instrumental in propagating the same where they abode. At length God revealed himself more fully to Moses and the Prophets; and last of all, by his Son Jesus Christ and the Apostles, he hath made a full discovery of his pleasure.

For the space of 2500 years before Moses, the revelation of the divine will was continued, so far as we know, by tradition only, from one to another, without the assistance of writing, or any holy Scriptures: which might be for these reasons; before the flood men lived very long, eight or nine hundred years^f, insomuch, that three persons only might convey from each to other the tradition from Adam himself^g, till after the flood; for Seth lived with his father Adam several hundred years, and so did Methuselah with Seth, and Noah with Methuselah; nay farther, one only person, Lamech, Noah's father, lived fifty years with Adam himself; and though after the flood the age of man was so much shortened, yet even till Moses many lived to a great age: Jacob told Pharaoh, that he was an hundred and thirty years of age, and had not attained to the years of his fathers^h. Now, amongst those that lived so long in the world, and were not so dispersed as afterwards, the purity of the heavenly doctrine might be the easier preserved, especially by the assistance of fresh revelations; whereas to those whose lives were afterwards much shorter, and who were more numerous, and more dispersed, a written word was more necessary. Indeed, when this word was written, it seemed to be confined to that one nation of the Israelites; but then the law of Moses did particularly provide for the instruction of other nations, and the care of strangers and proselytesⁱ, and the people of other countries had frequent opportunities of being instructed by the Jews, especially in the knowledge of the one true God, the Maker of heaven and earth. And as for

^e Gen. xviii. 19.
beginning,

^f Gen. v.
^h Gen. xlvii. 9.

^g See Helvicus's Chronol. at the
ⁱ Gen. xvii. 12. and Exod. xii. 49.

the Christian religion, although it hath not been revealed in all ages, nor to all nations in any age, yet that is no objection against its being truly revealed by God ; for if it were, then neither is reason nor natural religion from God ; for all men have not the same faculties or capacities, any more than the same proportion of riches : but as God, who is a sovereign Lord, was not obliged to make all his creatures equal, so neither to make all men capable of the same degrees of happiness, either before or after Christ's appearance : all this must be resolved into the wise determination of God's will, grounded upon just reason, although unknown to us.

Again, it ought to be no prejudice against revealed religion, either the Jewish or Christian, that for so many ages it was not made known, and that so great a part of the world are still Pagans or Mahometans ; because we know not what the condition of such men is in the next world to whom the true God and Christ hath not been revealed ; nor has God discovered to us how he deals with them : what we are concerned for is, to be thankful for, and duly improve, the talents we receive ; and to leave those who are invincibly ignorant to the justice and wisdom of God ; but not to raise objections from what we must confess we know nothing of.

That we may the more easily apprehend the nature and degrees of inspiration, we are to distinguish between an inspiration of suggestion, and of direction. The Holy Ghost immediately suggested to the penmen of the holy Scripture what they knew not before, nor could otherwise apprehend : as to Moses and the ancient prophets, what they delivered from the mouth or in the name of God, such as all the visions which they declare they saw, and all the messages, with this preface, *The Lord spake, saying ; or, Thus saith the Lord ;* so also, under the New Testament, the Holy Ghost immediately suggested to the Apostles the doctrine of the Gentiles being admitted to the same privileges with the Jews in the Church of Christ^k ; that the resurrection should

^k Eph. iii. 3, &c.

be in such a manner as is described^l; and such like. But then as to other matters, which the penmen of the Scriptures had heard before, or knew already, (that which they had seen and heard,) the inspiration that was necessary was that of direction or guidance, *viz.* so far as to refresh their memory, and stir them up to write what was necessary, and secure them from error. Nor is it requisite, in respect to either of these ways of inspiration, that all the very words and sentences should be dictated by the Holy Ghost; for even in the prophets we find a great difference^m between the plain and humble style of Amos, who was an herdsman, ch. vii. 14. and the more lofty expressions of the generality of the rest, who had a more liberal education, especially the prophet Isaiah. And as for the New Testament, although Christ promised, in respect to his sermons and discourses, the Holy Ghost *shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you*ⁿ; and by the gift of languages, they spake at certain times *as the Spirit gave them utterance*^o; and in some matters of great moment, the Apostles spake in the words which the Holy Ghost taught^p; yet at other times they express their doubts and hopes^q. And nothing is more evident, than that the holy writers generally used their own style, their reason, and their natural faculties, as well as their hands in writing, or their tongues in dictating. It is sufficient that they were always under the guidance and infallible direction of the Holy Spirit, who so assisted them, that they might instruct the church in speaking and writing, exactly according to truth and the will of God^r.

And there is no reason to conceive, but that the authors of the holy Scriptures might certainly know, without any manner of doubt^s, that they were inspired by God; since we

^l 1 Cor. xv. ^m Scito prophetam impelli a prophetia sua, ad loquendum ea loquendi ratione, quæ ipsi est familiaris, et consueta. *Maimon. Mor. Nevoch.* pars ii. cap. 29. ⁿ John xiv. 26. ^o Acts ii. 4. ^p 1 Cor. ii. 13.

^q 1 Cor. i. 16. Rom. xv. 24. 1 Pet. v. 12. ^r See 1 Cor. ii. 10, 13, 16. 2 Cor. xiii. 3. Eph. iii. 5. ^s Extra omnem dubitationis aleam posita, ut quæ sensibus vel intellectu apprehenduntur. *Maimon. Mor. Nevoch.* pars iii. cap. 24.

cannot conceive God to have less power and skill than a man hath, who can utter his mind in such a manner, that the person he utters his mind to shall have no doubt who it is that speaks, or what he means. And God, who is a spirit, can speak as intelligibly to the spirits and minds of men, as men can speak to the ear. So much we learn from the history of Abraham's attempting to slay his son; a thing abhorrent to nature, had he not been clearly assured of God's command to do it. Neither would Noah have prepared the ark, had he not been alike assured of the flood. When we talk with one another, a noise is made in the air that strikes on the ears of others, and thereby a motion is effected in the brain of the person we speak to, whereby we convey our thoughts to him. By this we can easily apprehend, how God can make such impressions on men's brains, as may convey to them such things as he intends to make known to them. The manner and degree of the impression may make it at least as certain that the motion comes from God, as a man may be certain that such a thing was told to him by such a person, and not by any other. From all which it appears, that although the several writers of the Scriptures may be allowed often to use their own words and style, yet this was done under the infallible guidance and influence of the Spirit. As when a man is left to use his own hand, or manner of writing, but is directed in the sense by one who dictates to him, or assists him. And, as miracles were effected by the immediate hand of God, though wrought by the hands of men, so the revelations were of God, though spoken or written by the prophets and apostles^t. To pretend that a book cannot be of divine authority and inspiration, in which there are many marks of human industry, and of the use of men's natural talents in the composure, is no better than to assert, that because we see things brought to pass by the help of natural agents, therefore God doth not exercise his providence in the government of the ordinary course of this world.

^t 2 Pet. i. 21. 2 Tim. iii. 16. 1 Kings viii. 53.

Thus much being said concerning the extraordinary inspiration vouchsafed to the prophets and apostles, we may here add a word concerning the ordinary inspiration of the Holy Spirit into the hearts of Christians, or the gifts and graces of God's Spirit; whereby he is said to *work in us, both to will and to do*; and that we are *led by the Spirit*; and that he *dwelleth in us*, for the enlightening our understanding, creating a secret pleasure in the performance of holy duties, raising an inward fervour in prayer, &c. Seeing God gave us the power of knowledge and understanding, it is not absurd to hope or pray that he would increase or enlighten it more. He endued us with the passions of love, joy, fear, &c. and he can exalt or raise them higher in us, and that in spiritual matters or exercises as well as temporal; and lastly, as easily make impressions on men's minds for these purposes, as in the extraordinary inspiration above mentioned.

SECTION V.

Upon what grounds we do believe the holy Scriptures to be the Word of God.

HERE we are to enquire, *first*, how we came to believe the truth of matters of fact recorded in the Bible. *Secondly*, supposing the truth of the history, how it appears that the matters recorded are of divine revelation, and that the doctrine came from God. This seems to be the most rational and proper method of coming to a true judgment in this matter.

First then, we have as great reason to believe the truth of what is contained in the history of the Bible, as we have to believe the truth of any history of actions done before our time: so, for example, though we did not live in the reign of Augustus, or Tiberius, the Roman emperors, about the time of Christ's birth and crucifixion, or in the reign of the former kings of England, as William the Conqueror, Henry VIII.

or Edward VI.; yet, since it is the common tradition of the best reputed historians, that there were such emperors of Rome, and such kings of England, and that such and such things happened, and such laws were enacted, and usages observed in their reigns, we find ourselves as well satisfied in the truth of their history, as if we had lived in their days; so the universal tradition of so many ages and persons, and in such different countries, from the time the things are said to be transacted, together with the institutions and customs all along observed in those several ages, is as clear an evidence of the truth of the matters contained in the holy Scriptures, as things of this nature are capable of^a; and there is no more reason to doubt it, than there is to question the authority of any of the most undoubted ancient historians, or the truth of any matter of fact, of which we have the clearest evidences from history, and the universal consent of mankind^b. And, as it hath been well observed, historical certainty is as certain in its kind, as physical or mathematical are in their kinds; that is, we have as great assurance (and rest as well satisfied therein) that there have been such Roman emperors, and such kings in England, and that such histories were written of them by the persons whose names they bear, as we have of the truth of any of the most plain and clear propositions: so the evidence for the history of the Bible is as certain and full as the subject-matter will bear, and such as in other matters of like nature makes us to rest

^a There are four ways whereby the mind of man can be rightly informed and convinced, concerning any ancient matter of fact. *First*, The capacity and ability of his informers. *Secondly*, Their credit with such persons of their times as were under no prejudices. *Thirdly*, The improbability that such persons could be imposed upon. *Fourthly*, The folly and danger of endeavouring so to impose upon them, if the matters were not strictly true. And since by these means we find ourselves to rest satisfied, and be convinced in regard to other histories, it seems an important question for any one to ask himself, *How comes it to pass, that I am not convinced upon the same or greater motives (as we shall see afterwards) in regard to the history of the Bible?*

^b So that such as assent not to the authority of the holy Scriptures upon the evidence produced for it, run themselves into greater absurdities than any they pretend to avoid, by rejecting doctrines they do not comprehend.

well satisfied, without any kind of hesitation or doubt of the contrary; and consequently ought to be esteemed morally certain or unquestionable, because those books cannot be rejected but upon such principles, whereby we might as well condemn all other authors that have no living evidence to vouch for them. (Note here; the books of the Old and New Testament, except the Apocrypha, are called *canonical*, from a Greek word, signifying a rule or limit measured out, as being a catalogue or list of such books as contain the rule or measure of faith.)

Secondly, As in general we have sufficient grounds of being fully assured of the matters of fact contained in the holy Bible; so particularly, as to the Old Testament, it was owned and received in all ages by the ancient church of the Jews, who are the best evidence in this case; and we have no reason to doubt the truth of it. Their commonwealth was settled upon the laws of Moses; and it is not credible they should submit to those burdensome laws and institutions, (such as circumcision; travelling once a year to a great distance to eat the Passover at Jerusalem; parting with the tenth part of their income,) and continue the exercise of them from time to time, without evident proof of their authority; or that they should suffer the fundamental laws of their nation to be changed after a long settlement; as it would be impossible for any one to forge a new Statute Book for England, which had not been seen or heard of before, and persuade the people to believe it to be their ancient laws. Besides, the public solemn festivals, as the Passover and Pentecost, &c. which were constantly kept up, and yearly celebrated, as enjoined in their books, render it as absurd to suppose that those books were not always genuine, as it would be to fancy, that notwithstanding our constant yearly observation of the feast of Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide, according to the appointment and direction of our Common Prayer Book, ever since the Reformation; yet that there were no such ordinances enjoined, nor any such book authorized, at the beginning of the Reformation.

Once more; the people were commanded from time to

time to study themselves, and teach their children, the Law^c; so that there could not be less than many thousand copies thereof; and every king, for the time being, was to write him a copy of the Law in a book^d. And, lastly, at the end of every seven years, in the Feast of Tabernacles, when all Israel was to appear before the Lord in the place he should choose, the Law was to be read before all Israel^e. All which plainly tended to the preservation of the Jewish religion and laws, free from all falsifying of the same, not to mention that the continued succession of prophets rendered any alteration thereof less practicable.

The other books, which were universally allowed to have been written by sundry persons, extraordinarily inspired at divers times, were gathered together by Ezra, and others of the Sanhedrim, or Great Council, (among whom were the latter prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi,) being all assisted by a divine prophetic spirit, into one book, after the return from the Babylonian captivity, as it is generally agreed by the ancient Jews, from the constant undoubted tradition of their forefathers; to which Nehemiah added ^f his book.

There seems indeed to have been a great neglect of the sacred books in the beginning of Josiah's reign, and some time before, in the idolatrous reigns of his father and grandfather, Ammon and Manasseh; insomuch, that when Hilkiah found a copy of the Law in some part of the temple, whilst it was repairing, Josiah was much astonished, as if it was uncommon^g: but that might be, because it was the very copy which Moses himself had wrote, and ordered to be put up in the side of the ark^h. The Hebrew text, verbatim, is thus; *Hilkiah found a book of the law in or by the hand of Moses*ⁱ. However that was, it sufficiently appears that copies of the Law were in many hands a little before and in the captivity,

^c Deut. xi. 18, 19, 20.

^d Deut. xvii. 18, &c.

^e Deut. xxxi. 10, &c.

^f Polyglot. Prolegom. Num. iv. Sect. 2, 3. Du Pin on the Canon of Script. book i. ch. i. sect. 2.

^g 2 Kings xxii.

^h Deut. xxxi. 24, 25, 26.

ⁱ 2 Chron.

xxxiv. 14.

and also copies of the Prophets. Daniel cites both the Law, and the Prophecy of Jeremiah^k. And long before Ezra came to Jerusalem, the people are said to make their offerings at the rebuilding of the temple upon their return, and the priests to execute their offices in their courses, *as it is written in the Book of Moses*^l, which must therefore have been in their hands. So that Ezra cannot be said properly to restore the books of the Old Testament, much less to compose them anew, as if they had been all burnt by the Chaldeans with the temple; which, besides what hath been just now mentioned, we cannot conceive the divine Providence would have permitted, since they were at first wrote for the preserving the word and will of God in the Church. Further, notwithstanding the great impiety of that age, yet there must have been many copies of the Law among the people of Israel, who were enjoined such a constant daily studying of, and meditating therein^m, and it is not conceivable that all of them should fail of their duty. Moreover the priests, who were very numerous, and were to be teachers and interpreters of the Law, must, at least, have each of them a copy for that purpose. And it cannot be conceived, that among so great numbers of the divine books throughout all the land, none of them should be preserved, how negligent soever the late government and the generality of the people had been concerning them. But Ezra, being an inspired prophet, set forth a correct edition, and settled the canon (or true catalogue) thereof, as they were received in his time, with the assistance of others, that were inspired too. He also might add what appeared necessary for the explaining and completing some of themⁿ, as in the last chapter of Deuteronomy, concerning the

^k Dan. ix. 2, 11, 13. And what Josephus makes Cyrus to own, that he had seen or read the prophecy of Isaiah (chap. xlv. 28.) concerning himself, that he should rebuild Jerusalem, (Joseph. Antiq. b. xi. c. 1.) seems very probable from Ezra i. 2. *The Lord hath charged me, &c.* ^l Ezra vi. 18. ^m Deut. vi. 7.

ⁿ Dean Prideaux accounts for the disputed passages in the Chronicles and Nehemiah in his *Old and New Testament Connected*, part i. book v. Anno 446. and book viii. Anno 291; where also concerning Simon the Just; compare Cornelius a Lapide apud Pol. Syn. Critic. in Nehemiah xii. 11.

death and burial of Moses, and the succession of Joshua, and several smaller passages; but then it was with the assistance of the same spirit by which the books were at first written °.

It is also plain, that the Hebrew Bible, which is now extant, hath remained uncorrupted, by the known care and strictness of the Jews in writing it exactly true; and that so nicely, as to number not the words only, but even the letters of every verse thereof; and also by their general notion of the danger of corrupting it wilfully, as believing that would be a worse crime *than to worship the golden calf, or sacrifice their children, or kill the prophets*^v: nor did Christ or his Apostles accuse the Jews of any such corruption, (as they did of many other crimes, and some of a lower degree.) Neither could the malice of the Jews, in opposition to the Christian doctrine, make any alteration in the Bible after Christ's time, partly by reason of so great a number of copies thereof dispersed in so many distant parts of the world, which must prevent a conspiring together for that purpose; and also, because the first Christians, being mostly of Jewish extraction, and understanding the language, would easily have discovered the alteration, if any had been made prejudicial to the Christian faith and practice.

As for the New Testament, we have more reason to rely upon the truth of what is therein contained, than on any other kind of history whatsoever; and that both in respect of the books themselves, and the authors of them.

The books have been owned and acknowledged in all ages, from the time they were first written, to be the writings of those whose names they bear; and they make up the canon (or catalogue of books) of the New Testament, and were owned as such by the primitive church. As for the four Gospels, one of them was written, and the rest confirmed, by St. John, as Eusebius assures us in his History^a; who, although he wrote above two hundred years after the apo-

° Gerard. *Loc. Com. Exegesis de Script.* c. 6. P Hottinger. *Thesaurus*,
lib. i. c. 2. quest. iv. et lib. i. c. 3. §. 4. Lightfoot of the *Fall of Jerusalem*, §. 11.
Du Pin on the *Canon of Script.* book i. ch. 4 §. 4. ^a Book iii. ch. 1.

stolical age, yet his accounts were taken from former writers^r. These books are also quoted by those who lived near the times of the writers; particularly, Irenæus cites by name (and he could not be mistaken, for he was instructed by Polycarp, a disciple of St. John) the four Gospels^s of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and the Acts^t of the Apostles; (which last he asserts to be written by St. Luke the Evangelist;) the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, the Corinthians, and so on to the end of that to Titus; the First Epistle of St. Peter, and the First Epistle of St. John. A catalogue of the several places out of the aforesaid Father is drawn up by the author cited in the margin^u, as also out of other ancient Fathers of the church. And the fore-mentioned Irenæus tells us^x, that “true knowledge consists in understanding the doctrine of the Apostles, and the ancient state of the church in the whole world, according to the succession of bishops, to whom they consigned the care of the church in every place, which has continued down to our times; and a complete body or treatise of Scripture preserved, without either forgery or falsification, without either addition or subtraction.” Here it may be further remarked, that a people now in being, the modern Jews, who hate the Christian religion, do yet retain those books conveyed to them from their ancestors, which, as they relate ancient types and prophecies, give a very great strength to it.

The Gospels and most of the Epistles were written before the destruction of Jerusalem, for they mention the temple and nation of the Jews as still in being: so that many persons must be then living who both knew the matters of fact to be true, and might be easily informed of the authors, who would have been soon disproved, if their relations had not been true. The matters contained in them are of great moment; as, the avoiding the eternal torments of hell, and obtaining the joys of heaven. And therefore, no doubt, the first Christians were curious that they might not be mistaken;

^r Book i. ch. 1.

^s Iren. lib. iii. c. 1.

^t Iren. lib. iii. c. 14.

^u Mr. Richardson on the Canon of the New Testament.

^x Iren. lib. iv. c. 63.

and they had sufficient opportunity of informing themselves in the very age of the Apostles, and the next age to them. Which doubtless they did; because the authority of the books of the New Testament depended on this, that it was known they were either written by the Apostles themselves, or by those who were their assistants and companions, or under their direction or approbation. In which we find the first Christians were so well satisfied, as to forsake the religion of their ancestors, and embrace a new one with the hazard of their lives. Further, in Tertullian's time, about one hundred and ninety-two years after the birth of Christ, the very authentic Epistles of the Apostles were still remaining in the several churches to which they were^y written. Again, this matter was so clear, that even the Jews and Heathens never denied these books to be genuine.

And as for those few of them, which were at first not so universally received as the rest; *viz.* the Epistle to the Hebrews, that of St. James, the Second Epistle of St. Peter, the Second and Third Epistles of St. John, the Epistle of St. Jude, and the Revelations; it is to be observed, *first*, that the Christian faith can subsist very well without them, by the remaining authority of those that were never questioned; especially the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. *Secondly*, There is good evidence, from antiquity, that they were all received in the most early times by those to whom they were sent, (who had the best opportunity of satisfying themselves,) and where they were at first published, and in general by the whole Greek church^z. *Thirdly*, It is no wonder that these Epistles, being written either to Christians dispersed, (the copies being no otherwise to be published, than by giving them to some, who might communicate them to others, as there was opportunity,) or to private persons at a great distance, were not so easily at-

^y Tertull. de Prescript. num. 36. edit. Rigalt. Lutetiæ 1634. ^z See at large Grot. de Veritate R. Christianæ, lib. iii. c. 1, 2. Dr. Mill's Prolegom. p. 24. &c. Bp. Burnet on the 6th Article; Dr. Whitby on the several Epistles; Mr. Richardson's Canon of the New Testament vindicated, §. 11.

tested, and upon that account not so generally received, as the others were, which were written to particular churches, who preserved the originals, and who well knew the author's hands^a, and the messengers that brought them. *Lastly*, Even those churches which at first doubted the authority of these books, were yet afterwards fully satisfied to receive them; which could proceed only from this, that there appeared more clear evidence of their being the writings of the Apostles.

It also appears, that our books of the New Testament are the same in substance that they were at the beginning, from the ancient copies, and translations of them into several languages; and more especially, the writings of the primitive Fathers, who quoted them, and wrote commentaries on them, and explications, which confirm and fix the text. The various readings, to which, by frequent transcribing, all other authors are subject, are not of that moment as to prejudice the fundamental points of religion, or weaken the authority of the Scriptures, because they make no alteration either in the Jewish or Christian doctrine; which, notwithstanding them, is the same, both as to articles of faith, and moral precepts.

As for the persons who wrote the Gospels, they could not be mistaken themselves in relating things done in their own time and sight. Matthew and John being constant attendants on our Saviour, as Mark was on Peter^b; and Luke on Paul^c; and Mark's and Luke's Gospels agree with the others, and were approved of by St. John^d. Nor can they be suspected of any design to deceive others; on the contrary, we may appeal to the consciences of all who read their writings, whether they have not all the reason to believe, that those writers were in good earnest, and did relate what themselves were thoroughly persuaded of.

Again, none of them were experienced persons, but mean and unlearned fishermen, the most unlikely to contrive or

^a 2 Thess. iii. 17.

^b Euseb. Hist. lib. iii. c. 15.

^c 2 Tim. iv. 11.

^d Euseb. lib. iii. c. 24.

attempt the establishment of a religion, which was so contrary to the received principles both of the Jews and Gentiles, in all parts of the world. So also, by reason of the plainness, simplicity, and candour, that appears in all their writings, in which are no tokens of contrivance or design, but are all, like the authors, plain and honest, even so far as to own sincerely their own failings; as that Matthew was a publican, or tax-gatherer, an office which the Jews abhorred; that St. John ran away from his Master in danger, and Peter denied him: and they mention their own ambitious contentions about worldly greatness, &c. Again, the writers of the New Testament were men that could propose to themselves no manner of advantage in this life; nay they evidently contemned the world; they neglected and despised all honours and wealth, all worldly reputation or fame; yea, they foresaw^c and exposed themselves to the greatest hazards and contempt in publishing the holy Gospel, and suffered cruel torments, and most of them death, to bear witness to the truth of all they preached: therefore, they could have no design, but to publish the will of God, in obedience to Christ, and in hopes of a reward hereafter.

There may have been some, indeed, who have died in a false belief, or for a mistaken opinion; but it is not credible that a great number of persons should die, or suffer so much, in confirmation of what they knew to be false, without any prospect of advantage, either to themselves or others. Nor can it be reasonably supposed, that St. Paul, (the author of so many of the Epistles,) who had been so zealous a persecutor of the Christian church, would on a sudden become such a champion for the same, and hazard his life to establish it, on any other motives or design than to manifest the truth in obedience to Christ.

Further, not only Christians, but even Jewish and Pagan historians, confirm the history of Christ, and the Christian religion. Josephus, a Jewish writer, (soon after the destruction of Jerusalem, which was about forty years after

^c Matt. xvi. 24, 25. Acts xi. 22.

Christ's ascension,) mentions "that good man John the Baptist, his preaching, and exhorting the people to the study of virtue and piety, and to be baptized; and his being put to death by Herod; and also James, the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ^f." These testimonies are the more considerable, because Josephus mentions them with some remarkable circumstances of matters of fact at that time, in his own nation: as that some of the Jews were of opinion, that Herod's impious action of killing John Baptist, was followed by a divine vengeance on him, being routed^g in a battle by Aretas. And further, that there arose a sort of a national quarrel between Albinus, the appointed governor of Judæa, and Ananias, the high-priest, on the score of the high-priest's condemning of James, the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ; and that Ananias was removed from the high-priesthood^h. As for that other account of the same author, "concerning one Jesus, a wise man, (if yet it be lawful to call him a man,) his miracles, crucifixion under Pontius Pilate, resurrection the third day, his numerous followers, both Jews and Gentiles, (as proselytes,) and the race of Christians, who are so called from him," and (which he says) were remaining in his time: however this latter passage has been questioned by some, it is sufficiently vindicated, and shewn to contain nothing but what might be related by Josephus, who has given so full an account of John Baptist, and James the brother of Christ. On the contrary, it would be strange that so accurate an historian, giving so particular a relation of the affairs of his country, should not mention that of Christ, when (as we shall see) the Gentile historians do it. Nor is this account of Christ improperly inserted in the place where we find it, not disagreeing with what goes before, and follows after, as is pretended: for, in the former part of the same chapter, Josephus treats of the Jewish affairs under Pilate; whence he very properly proceeds to mention Christ, what

^f Antiq. book xviii. ch. 7. and book xx. ch. 3. ^g Ibid. ^h See Dr. Cave's Hist. Literar. tom. ii. Josephus, and the first Discourse on Josephus, before L'Estrange's Version.

he did and suffered under his government; which (he says) happened about the same time¹. Again, what follows in this chapter seems less to appertain to Pilate's history, than this period concerning our Lord. Sure it is, that in this whole chapter, Josephus's intent was to relate the transactions during Pilate's procuratorship, although happening at different seasons: neither doth he affirm this relation of his, concerning Christ's resurrection and miracles, as being the subject of his own belief, but as what was related and credited by the Christians, his followers, at that time.

And as Josephus, a Jew, so Tacitus, an heathen historian, within less than a hundred years after the death of Christ, wrote of him as being the author of the Christian name, and put to death by Pontius Pilate, the procurator, in the reign of ^kTiberius. And Pliny, about the same time, wrote an account to his master, the emperor Trajan, as of other matters, so concerning Christians: and in particular, that they were wont to assemble together on a set day, and sing hymns to Christ as God^l. Also Suetonius, another Pagan historian, about the same time too, tells us^m, that the emperors drove away the Jews, and punished the Christians, on account of their profession of Christ.

Likewise this observation may be added, *viz.* that the doctrine of Christianity was in itself very offensive, both to the Jews and Gentiles, (which, to be sure, was a great obstacle to their conversion;) to the Jews, by reason of Christ's mean appearance, the debasing of their law and traditions, and equalling the Gentiles' title to God's favour with theirs. Whereas they expected the Messiah to be a great prince; that the law of Moses (which had been established by God himself) was to continue for ever; and that themselves were the chief favourites of heaven. Nor were the doctrines of Christianity less offensive to the Gentiles, by the Apostles preaching up one invisible Deity, a resurrection, a spiritual worship, and severe morality, as chastity, sobriety,

¹ Book xviii. chap. 4. ^k Annal. lib. xv. c. 44. ^l Epistol. lib. x. epist. 97.
^m Suetonius in Claudio, c. 25. et Nerone, c. 16.

&c. Furthermore, the Roman governors endeavoured with their utmost craft and strength, by the most severe persecutions, and even new-invented methods of torment, to prevent its spreading; and, at the same time, the heathen priests, being provoked by the desertion of their altars, animated the world against the professors of it; yet the truth of the Gospel was so convincing in those times, (except where prejudice, interest, and lust darkened men's reason and judgment,) that the aforesaid Pliny (in the same Epistle) intimates to the emperor, that "there were a great number of Christians, of both sexes, and of all ages and degrees, and that not only in the greater cities, but in the villages and hamlets, insomuch that the temples of the heathen gods were almost deserted, and their solemn rites for a long time discontinued." So evident and undeniable was the demonstration of the divine authority of the Christian religion, that it was able to overcome the strongest prejudices of so great a number of people, and make its way through all dangers; and this was acknowledged by the greatest and wisest historians of those times. So that, upon the whole, there cannot be a better or clearer evidence for what we most assuredly believe to have been done; and one may as well suspect the truth of any or all the histories of the world, as that of the holy Scriptures; and therefore, as we believe any thing before our time, so we have most reason to believe the history of the holy Bible, and particularly the New Testament.

After all, some may say, it seems plain enough that there are sufficient grounds for our undoubted belief of the truth of Scripture, as to matters of fact there recorded; but how does it follow, that the doctrine delivered in the Scriptures is divine, and came from God? It is answered,

Thirdly, The doctrine itself contained in the holy Scriptures, and its tendency to holiness, peace, and true happiness, sufficiently shew it was no contrivance of man, but that a wise and good God was the author of it; so for the New Testament, in particular, the Christian doctrine was not suited to humour any order or condition of men, as it would have been if it had been a contrivance of the Apostles; for, as hath been already

intimated, it directly crosses the notion which the Jews had of a triumphant and princely Messiah, when the founder of it, the true Messiah, was declared to be Christ crucified. It also further enraged the Jews, because their ceremonial law was cried down, and the Gentiles were declared to have an equal title with them to God's favour. And the Gentiles themselves were as highly offended, because they were accused of idolatry, and the impurities of their religious rites laid open and condemned. The Christian doctrine does not comply with the ambitious man's desire of honour, nor the miser's hunting after wealth, nor the voluptuous or debauched in their pleasures and vicious enjoyments; but crosses all such appetites, by enjoining humility, contentedness under the cross, (which is declared the portion of a Christian,) despising the world, sobriety, chastity, and temperance. Further, the New Testament teaches the most sublime truths, and the most perfect rules, such as are most worthy of God to lay down, for all states and conditions of life; and the most powerful motives to practise accordingly. Again, the Christian laws are such as any wise man would choose to live by, since they are adapted to the happiness and well-being both of particular persons and societies; being such as promote in an eminent manner holiness and peace, health and reputation, happiness, comfort, and safety; forbidding all excess of indulging the natural appetites, which would destroy health; and all vice and impiety, which rob us of our ease of mind and of reputation; and enjoining every one to be exactly just; to deal as he would be dealt with himself; to be affectionate and kind one to another; to succour and help the needy; to comfort the distressed; to be meek and patient, gentle and tender-hearted, in imitation of the perfect goodness that is in God. Christ indeed said, that he was come *to send fire on earth*; and not to give *peace, but rather division*ⁿ; but that is not spoken concerning the natural tendency of his doctrine, than which nothing can more promote peace and happiness; but that, by reason of the corrupt nature of mankind, he foresaw that such

ⁿ Luke xii.

would be the consequence of his doctrine, that men would quarrel and divide about it.

The Christian doctrine does also afford the most solid comfort, teaching us, that a wise, powerful, and good God is our Father; and therefore, that all things in the end shall work for our good. In the mean time, if we suffer, it is, like Christ, to suffer for a little while, and to be glorified and happy for ever. I say, these, although not clear demonstrations, are yet plain tokens, that not a wicked or deluded spirit, nor the politic contrivance of men, but the wisdom of God, delivered such a doctrine to the world: and supposing it to be of divine revelation, we could not reasonably desire better signs of its being actually and truly so. But then,

Fourthly, There are other evident marks, that shew the holy Scriptures are the word of God, such as prophecies and miracles: which (as the primitive defenders of Christianity observe) afford a demonstration proper to it; and that so divine, as Paganism cannot pretend to°. There are many prophecies in the Old Testament, especially of the captivity of Israel and Judah, and of the birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, which were foretold a long time beforehand, and were exactly accomplished: and in the New Testament, Christ foretold his own death^p, his resurrection^q, and the descent of the Holy Ghost^r. Again, the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple was foretold by Christ, and that with the remarkable circumstances of it^s, and afterwards by his Apostles, (when the Jews were secure, and had no such apprehensions,) which came to pass accordingly; as also did that other prophecy of Christ, when he was low and despised, that his Gospel should be propagated over the world, and that the gates of hell should not prevail against it, notwithstanding the violent opposition he foretold should be made^t. Now that foreknowledge could not be attained but by a revelation from God, because those events depended not on the course of nature, but the will of God;

° Orig. contra Celsum fere ad initium.

^p Matt. xx. 19.

^q Matt. xvi. 21.

^r Luke xxiv. 49.

^s Matt. xxiv.

^t Matt. xvi. 18. and xxiv. 14. and x. 17.

as the captivity and destruction of the Jews were the effects of God's displeasure, in punishing them for their sins, (the very commission of which, depending on the free determination of their own wills, could be only foreseen by the Searcher of hearts,) and the redemption by Christ, with all the particular circumstances and ways of effecting it, was the gracious and merciful intention of God to save mankind. Nor could any one, except by revelation, foretel any changes in the natural order of things, (such as were foretold and effected by Moses and the Apostles :) for since God himself, who first established the course of nature, has alone the power of varying it, it cannot be foreseen when he will interpose. By this argument God himself expostulated with the Jews, and upbraided their reliance upon idols, because they could not *shew what shall happen, neither the former things, nor could declare things to come hereafter*^u. As for the oracles of the Heathen, though their predictions did sometimes prove true, (as being grounded on natural causes, known to the spirits by long experience,) yet they failed frequently, and were often given out in very ambiguous terms, which by degrees brought them^v into contempt.

In the next place, the miracles that were done by those who spoke or wrote such words, in testimony of the truth of them, and of the authority of those who wrote and preached, are a sufficient evidence that they are from God. Not that every strange work, barely considered in itself, is a proper evidence of the truth of any religion; but such as are wrought with a declared purpose and design^w to establish such a religion in the world by God's appointment, as were the miracles we read of in the Old and New Testament^x. So that we are not only to attend to the miracles themselves, but also to the end and design of them; it being the end of

^u Isaiah xli. 22, 23. ^v See Dr. Jenkins on the Reasonableness of the Christian Religion, vol. i. part iii. chap. 3. ^w *Ea proprie Miracula vocant Arabes, quæ prophetæ ad prophetiam suam confirmandam edit.* Pocock. *Specimen Hist. Arab.*

p. 186. ^x See Exodus iii. 12, 20. and iv. 1.—10. John v. 20, 36. Acts ii. 22, 36. and v. 12.

miracles to confirm the doctrine to be of God. We do not indeed know the essences of things, nor the utmost extent of the power of nature, how far it goes, or where the supernatural power of God begins; yet we do certainly know the nature of many things by their marks and properties, and the usual regular course of God's providence so far, that we can easily discern what is miraculous: thus, although we know not the power of fire in its utmost extent, yet we know it is contrary to the property or the usual effects of fire not to burn; and therefore, when the three children in Daniel walked in the midst of a burning fiery furnace unhurt, we know it was miraculous. So we know it is not the force of two or three words that raises the dead, and heals diseases.

Again, although it be granted, that evil spirits may, through God's permission, perform some works that appear very wonderful and miraculous; insomuch that the holy Scripture warns us against lying wonders^y; yet we cannot believe that the providence and goodness of God would leave us without some proper method of distinguishing between the effects of divine power, and the delusions of the devil. If therefore any person should work a wonder, to testify to an impious doctrine that teaches idolatry, or encourages wickedness, (as was the case of the going after other gods^z;) it is to be looked upon as one of those lying wonders the Scripture warns us against; because it is a contradiction to the truth and holiness of God, that he should ever commission any man to teach any doctrine contrary to truth and holiness: and it would be to deny himself, to commission any man to invalidate former revelations sufficiently^a confirmed, or to encourage any impiety, contrary to the certain dictates of natural religion or revelation. But where the doctrine tends to the promoting of the glory of God, the drawing off mankind from sin to holiness, and the overthrowing the

^y Deut. xiii. 1, &c. Matt. xxiv. 24. 2 Thess. ii. 9. ^z Deut. xiii. 1, &c.

^a As for the ceremonial law, taught by Moses to be of God, by the miracles which he wrought in confirmation thereof, that law was not properly made void, but fulfilled in Christ, and, being a resemblance of him, ceased at his coming.

kingdom of Satan in the world, (which experience proved to be the effect of the publication of the Gospel, and which it cannot be expected the Devil himself would be assistant in,) and where the preachers of such doctrine are enabled, in testimony thereof, to confirm their mission from God, not by working privately, or in the dark, or in mean and trivial cases, but by an open and frequent working, before numbers of people, of such evident, great, and substantial miracles, the effects whereof were not momentary, but lasting, as curing the blind, healing diseases, and raising the dead, and such like, as we read in the holy Scriptures; in this case we must acknowledge ^b *it is the finger of God*. Nor ought it to be objected, that this is proving in a circle, the doctrine by the miracles, and the miracles by the doctrine; for in this way of reasoning, they are only the miracles that prove the doctrine; but in order to this, the doctrine is to be first supposed to be such in its nature as to be capable of being proved by miracles, that is, either indifferent, or not absurd, contradictory or impious.

In the Old Testament, the miracles wrought by Moses in Egypt were sufficient proofs that God sent him: for although it may be thought, that any one miraculous work, such as that of the magicians seems to be, should be allowed an evidence as well as another, (supposing that wrought by Moses,) being both equally superior to the power of natural causes; yet those wrought by Moses, being evidently so much superior to those of the magicians, and their power being restrained by that superior power by which Moses wrought, in that struggle between him and the Devil for superiority, render the evidence brought by Moses in degree greater than that by the magicians: for they could indeed imitate the turning of rods into serpents, and of water into blood, and also the bringing up of frogs; but not the inflicting the plague of lice or boils; nay, they could not defend themselves from the boils, nor *stand before Moses*, nor could their enchantments prevail any more: and therefore they

^b As the magicians themselves did, Exod. viii.

submitted, and acknowledged, that there was *the finger of God*^c. So also the miracles of Moses, in making the Red sea dry land^d, and in fetching water out of the rock^e, do evidence that God was with him, and gave testimony to his words, and the laws he published^f.

For the New Testament: by the angels that appeared to the shepherds, when Christ was born; the voice from heaven at his baptism, declaring, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*; his curing diseases; his casting out devils, and raising the dead to life; his being transfigured on the mount, when his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment glistened like flashes of light, and a voice came out of the cloud, again declaring him to be the Son of God; the graves opening, and the sun being darkened at his passion; his own rising again, (in some respect the greatest of all miracles,) and ascending into heaven; and, lastly, the miraculous power of the Holy Ghost: I say, by these God the Father testified the truth of all that our Lord Jesus Christ said, as our Lord himself argued^g, *The works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me*^h; and therefore we believe the doctrine that he delivered came from God. So for the Apostles, and many of the first Christians, the Holy Ghost, that is, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, were bestowed on them in an extraordinary mannerⁱ, whereby they also healed diseases, cast out devils, foretold things to come, and spoke divers languages which they had never heard, and had a power of imparting those gifts of the Holy Ghost to others. Hereby God himself gave testimony to their words and writings; for that miraculous power, with which they were in so great a measure endued from on high, was God's seal to their commission, and so was for the satisfaction or convincing of all that heard them, or read their writings, that God was with them, and sent them to publish his holy will^k; and if they had delivered any

^c Exod. viii. 18, 19. ix. 11.

^d Exod. xiv.

^e Numbers xx.

^f Exod.

iv. 8, 9.

^g John v. 36.

^h See Matt. ii. 10, 11. John xx. 30, 31. Acts

ii. 22.

ⁱ Acts ii.

^k Mark xvi. 20. Heb. ii. 4.

thing that was not divine, a wise, true, and good God would never have thus borne witness to it himself, nor endued them with such extraordinary ability to convince men.

There is one consideration which adds further strength to this argument, and that is, the continuation of the miraculous powers in the next ages of the church, which the writers of those times do not only unanimously attest, but challenge the emperors, and the respective governors of provinces, to convince them by experiment, and dare them to contradict it; and even offer to cast their lives upon this proof¹. It is also to be remembered, that even the Jewish writers own there was such a person as Jesus, who lived and died as the Gospels report, though they mention him with scorn and disdain. They deny not the matter of fact, that he wrought divers miracles^m; but then they pretend that power not to be a sufficient testimony, because he might work by magic, and the power of Beelzebub, the chief of devils; as their forefathers in Christ's time had objected to himself: whereas the power of miracles was the very sign which God gave their great master Moses, for this very end, that they should believe in himⁿ.

Here also we have a further confirmation of the divine authority of the Old Testament, or the canon of holy Scriptures, received by the Jewish church, which was owned and confirmed by Christ and his Apostles, who referred to it, and quoted testimonies out of it, as being the word of God, and of divine inspiration^o. So that the same miracles, which testify the authority of Christ and his Apostles, do also evidence the divine authority of the Old Testament; which the same Christ and his Apostles owned to be by inspiration. And thus it is manifest we have the most solid grounds for our believing the holy Scriptures to be the word of God.

¹ As Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Origen, Tertull. Min. Fœlix, and Lactantius cited by Grotius in Mark xvi. 17. The particular miracle there mentioned is the casting out devils. Origen mentions others, (*contra Celsum*, edit. Cantab. p. 62, 80.) and further says, that he was an eye-witness thereof, p. 124. ^m Bishop Kidder's *Demonst. of the Messiah*, vol. i. ch. 5. Lightfoot, *Hor. in Matt.* xii. 24. ⁿ Exod. iv. 1—10. ^o See John v. 39. Luke xxiv. 44. 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16.

And whereas some may wonder, after such demonstrations of the truth of the Christian religion, how it should come to pass that the main body of the Jews, and afterwards those wise and virtuous emperors, such as Vespasian, Titus, Trajan, &c. and other inquisitive men of those times, did not only refuse to embrace, but even persecuted it; such may consider, *first*, that as Christ's kingdom was not of this world, so it was to be propagated by the wisdom and power of God, without the assistance of, and even in opposition to, worldly wisdom, and worldly wise men. *Secondly*, As for the incredulity of the Jews, that was in part occasioned by Christ's mean appearance, whereas they expected their Messiah should be a great temporal king; as also from the despised part of their country, where Christ mostly resided, *viz.* Galilee; and from his exposing the worldliness, hypocrisy, and vain traditions of the Pharisees, a leading party amongst them; and, *lastly*, because the doctrine of the Gospel equalled the Jews (the posterity of Abraham, and God's peculiar people) with the rest of the world, as to their title in God's covenant and promises^p. *Thirdly*, No wonder that the great men of the world, such as emperors and ministers of state, should not take much notice of a doctrine, in appearance new and strange, preached up by a few ignorant fishermen and tent-makers; or that persons wholly given up to voluptuousness and pleasure, should contemn and deride a doctrine, which taught the cross, and a renouncing of present enjoyments, in hopes of better in another world; or, *lastly*, that such as esteemed themselves the only wise and knowing men, great philosophers of the age, should despise the plain simplicity of the Gospel^q. *Fourthly*, That there is more reason to believe the doctrine of Christ upon the account of his miracles, than to question the truth of his miracles upon the account of the unbelief of the Jews or Gentiles; and that because this very unbelief was in itself foretold many ages before^r, that it should so come

^p See the second and third general remarks on the Gospels.
^q See further the sixth general remark on the Acts of the Apostles.

^r Isaiah liii. 1. and vi. 9.

to pass in the days of the Messiah: which prediction, among others that related to him, being fulfilled, is the greater confirmation of the truth of the same Jesus being the Messiah, and of the doctrine which he taught.

As for any other religion, there is none that can justly pretend to be of God. The author of the Mahometan or Turkish religion was a vicious person, and his behaviour contrary to that of a messenger sent from God. His doctrines are absurd and ridiculous, and contrived for the gratifying of ambition and lust in himself and followers, and were confirmed by no public and uncontrollable miracles, but propagated at the first by craft and fraud, and afterwards by violence and force of arms^s, the impostor pretending, that "a sword fell into his hands from heaven for that purpose^t." The Jewish religion was founded wholly upon the expectation of a Messiah to come; and the prophets have so plainly limited the time of his appearance, before the dissolution of the Jewish government, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the temple, that it is now past many ages ago, in what manner soever we make the computation^u.

Whereas there are some who want new miracles to convince them, it may be said, *first*, that God is wiser than we, and knows best what is fit for the conversion of men: and it is impious and unreasonable to demand any more for our private conviction. *Secondly*, If God should gratify such persons, others would also expect the same; and then the frequency of miracles would make them not convincing, because being common, they would be disregarded, or would quickly be looked upon to be the effect of natural causes only. And now, since God hath been pleased to reveal himself to us, and so fully to confirm his revelation, for any to expect new revelations and new miracles to confirm them, is as unreasonable, as it would be for them to demand that the King and Parliament should afresh enact and publish

^s Dr. Smith, *Epistola prima de Moribus Turcarum*, p. 95, &c. ^t Prideaux's *Life of Mahomet*, and his *Letter to a Deist*. Pocock. *Specimen Hist. Arabum*, p. 116, &c. ^u Dan. ix. 24, &c. Hag. ii. 7. See Grotius *de Verit. Christ. Relig.* lib. v. §. 13.

the laws of the land in every reign, although they were formerly passed and ratified as they ought to be, and as such, are now upon the records, and their authority hath been allowed ever since they were first enacted. Nay, though some persons had such means of conviction granted them, as they pretend would be effectual, *viz.* that one of their former companions should appear to them from the dead, and give them the dismal account of all that black scene of horror and torments in the next world, and of the unspeakable joys which are lost by a wicked life in this; yet, as our Saviour says, *if they believe not Moses and the prophets,* (we may add, and the Gospel on the evidence given thereof,) *neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead;* as many on the apprehension of death have expressed great remorse and resolution, which yet on their recovery had no real effect on them. They might indeed on a sudden be surprised at an apparition, and entertain some serious thoughts of a new life; but it would rarely effect a real change in their hearts and practice. They would quickly have a mind to believe the apprehension of it to proceed only from a melancholy fancy and imagination, which their vicious companions would not fail to improve: or, if they believed in spirits, they might imagine a trick put upon them by some evil ghost or spirit, that personated their deceased friend, as taking a delight in disturbing and perplexing their minds, and filling them with vain and groundless terrors. Thus they would by degrees quiet their minds, and cheerfully return to their former course; and indeed, they would argue a great deal more rationally, than when they resist all the substantial evidence of the truth of the holy Scriptures, and the Christian religion.

The miracles pretended to have been wrought among the Papists, or the ancient Pagans, weaken not the force of the evidence of the primitive Christian miracles. For as to the former, *first*, the juggling and impostures of the Popish priests have been so notorious, that even many of their own party, of credit, refuse to vouch for them*. *Secondly*, Most

* See Bishop Kidder of the Messiah, part i. c. vi. num. 2.

of their miracles are ridiculous and trifling, very unlike the grave and substantial ones which Christ and his Apostles wrought; as appears by many stories of the Virgin Mary, with her babe, visiting her votaries; the sweating and motions of images; the odour of reliques, &c. *Thirdly*, They are brought to confirm doctrines which Christ and his Apostles never taught, but the novel tenets which the Church of Rome had established, and the additions they have made, different from, and even contrary to, the Christian doctrine, as concerning transubstantiation, the worship of images, &c. *Fourthly*, Whereas Christ and his Apostles wrought their miracles among the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles, these are only published among their own credulous people, who are easily imposed upon, not wrought among those called heretics, who stand in need of conviction. *Fifthly*, Popular error is a great spring from whence miracles issue in the Church of Rome. Upon the least accident that happens to the Italians, and the least sickness or indisposition that seizeth them, as any one may observe, they make a vow to some statue of the Virgin, or of some saint, to be delivered from it; and if they escape, they attribute their recovery or deliverance from danger to the miraculous statues or images to whom they made their vows; and cause pictures to be drawn of what happens to them, and set up in churches^γ. *Lastly*, It is usual for some wicked beggars to counterfeit themselves cripples, blind, or struck with the palsy, for five or six years together, to make people at last believe that a miracle has been wrought upon them, attributing their recovery to some image of the Virgin, or to some saint, whereby they are believed to be good men, and favoured by God, and are liberally relieved, and often maintained ever after during life.

The miracles pretended to have been wrought by Apollonius Tyaneus, and others among the ancient heathens, are confuted by the author under cited^z. The wisest Pagans confess many of them to have been forged^a, or wrought in

^γ Frauds of Romish Papists and Monks, in a Journey to Italy, anno 1690, Letter iv.

^z Parker, De Deo, §. 26, 27.

^a Livius apud Grot. de Verit. lib. iv. cap. 8.

the night, &c. But admitting any of them were really done, it was not in confirmation of any doctrine, but on some other account; as in the case of Vespasian's curing a blind man, to render him the more venerable, in order to raise him to be emperor: for which purpose, it is no wonder that God should honour him in an extraordinary manner, being designed to be the executioner of his displeasure against the Jews: he wanted majesty and authority, which by this means, his historians tell us, was supplied^b.

Some are offended with the method of the holy Scriptures, in which there is not that exact order observed as in some other writings, but the same doctrines and duties are repeated, and urged over again. Such ought to consider, that this is occasioned by a wise design of the divine Providence; for hence, *first*, ordinary readers take more notice of what they find so often mentioned; *secondly*, hence it is, that what is obscure in one place, is more fully and plainly expressed in another.

Others want to reconcile the many slaughters mentioned in the Old Testament, with the character of a gracious and good God towards his own creatures. For instance, in the drowning so great a body of the Egyptians in the Red sea^c; the slaughter of three thousand Israelites by some of their own people, on account of the idolatry of the molten calf^d; the terrible destruction of the Canaanites^e; the death of seventy thousand, on the occasion of David's numbering his people^f. Such should observe, *first*, in respect to God, that he is the Author and Giver of life, and may take it away when and how he pleases; and we must not separate his justice from his mercy. *Secondly*, Those who perished were destroyed for their abominable sins committed against the light of nature. *Thirdly*, In the case of the Canaanites, the Israelites were only the executioners of God's justice, and of his punishment of sinners, when their iniquities were full, that is, were at the height, and the corruption was universal,

^b Suetonius and Tacitus apud Grot. lib. iv. c. 8. ^c Exod. xiv. ^d Exod. xxxii.

^e Josh. viii. &c.

^f 2 Sam. xxiv.

and loudly called for vengeance from a holy and just God : and though in the last instance above mentioned, David owned his own fault, but esteemed the sheep, his people, to be guiltless ; that shews he knew his own sins, but not his people's ; who, for their sins too, being guilty before God, were punished on that occasion, as David was himself, in the loss of so many subjects.

As to the use of reason, in respect to the particular doctrines of the holy Scriptures, it is to be considered, that although we are not to assent to that, which, being the proper object of our reason, is a plain contradiction to it, and so against that rational faculty which God has endued us with, to guide and direct us ; as the doctrine of the Papists, that a consecrated wafer or bread, (which we see, and feel, and taste, to continue a wafer or bread,) is nevertheless converted into the real body of Christ, and such like ; yet there may be many things above our reason, and which we cannot account for, through a want of the distinct knowledge of their nature and real properties ; and yet being satisfied that God hath revealed them, we rationally give our assent to them : so, although it is above our reason to comprehend the doctrine of the Trinity, and the resurrection, &c. yet being satisfied God hath revealed such doctrines, and that he is most wise and true, and able to do all that he hath declared he will do, it is most consistent with our reason to believe them ; and in this case reason is not excluded, but only kept to its proper business ; for here it is the proper business of reason to find out that God hath revealed such truths, and to help us to discover the true sense of that revelation ; and when that is obtained, reason hath done its office, and the revelation of God is sufficient to ground our faith upon, however difficult or unaccountable to us the nature of such things may be. Thus, our eyes are given us for a guide, but we may nevertheless go a wrong way, without some director, whom our eyes may assist us in following.

How many things are there which are the constant objects of our senses, which yet we can give but a mean account of, much less perfectly understand ? such as the motions of the

heavens, and of the wind and seas ; the light of the sun ; the growth of corn and other plants ; to say nothing of the union of our souls and bodies, or how the one is affected by the other : all which so far exceed our comprehension, that if we did not daily see and experience them, they would seem as wonderful as the resurrection, or any other mystery in religion. Nor can it be otherwise, since the reason and apprehension of man is finite and limited, and can proceed only by analogy, or the proportion which one part of the creation bears to another, but cannot reach the divine nature, which is incomprehensible ; and, undoubtedly, had some the knowledge of this world we live in only from a book, they would conclude, that most of the things that are in it were as incomprehensible, impossible, and therefore incredible, as they fancy any thing to be in the Christian doctrine.

If it still be objected, that by the instances last mentioned it appears indeed that we believe many things to have a being, though we cannot comprehend how they have it ; yet the reason of such belief is, because we perceive by our senses (of hearing, seeing, and feeling) that such things are : but it cannot be said so of some Christian doctrines ; as of the Trinity, the resurrection, the union of the divine and human nature in Christ, &c. In answer to this, it is also true, that we believe what we cannot comprehend ourselves, or distinctly explain to others, though it has no manner of relation to our senses : for example, an eternal duration, which we cannot conceive without supposing a succession of time, and that will at last carry our thoughts to some first moment, from which those that follow are derived ; which, as supposing a beginning of time, is a contradiction to eternity ; and yet, without an eternal duration, or some being from eternity, how could any thing ever have a being or motion at all, since nothing could ever produce itself, for then it would act before it is ? and how could any thing exist, or have a being, without a cause ? And yet we believe God to be self-existent, or to have a being from himself ; so that here is something believed which we cannot conceive, and has no relation to our senses.

And if it be replied, that although we cannot comprehend particularly how there could be an infinite eternal duration or being, or first mover; yet we believe it, because our reason tells us it must be so in general, otherwise there could be no being at all: then we may as well believe the truth of any particular revealed mystery of religion contained in the holy Scriptures, though it be neither the object of our senses, nor can we otherwise comprehend it, if we have good reason to believe the truth and divine authority of the holy Scriptures in general, which contain such a doctrine, and that leads us to examine the proof thereof, and be determined thereby, notwithstanding our reason fails in the explication of such particular doctrine. In the same manner, one may argue from the consistency of God's foreknowledge of future events, which is manifest by the prophecies, with the liberty of human actions. And therefore, all those should weigh this matter well who believe an infinite and incomprehensible Being, and yet reject any other doctrine, which relates to an infinite Being, because it is incomprehensible.

Those who pretend that the different opinions of the professors of Christianity, and the schisms and heresies, are objections against it, may as well affirm, (since, through the weakness of human understanding and prejudice, disputes arise in all arts,) that because so many lawyers differ in opinion about the sense of some laws, therefore there is no law which we can rely on. The disputes about the nature of a thing is no argument against the truth and being of the thing disputed about; nay, the very disputes and different opinions being foretold by Christ and his Apostles, are the greater confirmation of the Christian religion^g. The same may be said concerning the ill lives of too many Christians, whether of the clergy or laity; since it was foretold the time would come, when some who had a *form of godliness, should deny the power thereof*^h. That being so, is rather a proof of the truth of the Gospel which foretold it, as it is of the general corruption of human nature, and the prevalency of

^g Luke xii. 51, 52, 53. 1 Tim. vi. 5.

^h 2 Tim. iii. 5.

some men's lusts and passions over their reason. Nor can it argue either that such persons do not believe what they profess to teach, any more than that a physician believes nothing of medicine, because he often does not practise himself as he prescribes: or that a man is not still a man, though he has the plague upon him.

To those who complain of the Christian religion's thwarting the natural inclinations of men, which may reasonably be supposed to be from God, and pretend that we seem to be born under one law, and bound to another; it may be answered, *first*, "God hath such love for men, that if we be not wanting to ourselves, and are sincere, he will afford his assistance in proportion to our need. *Secondly*, God did not design to create man in the full possession of happiness at first, but to train him up to it by the trial of his obedience; but there would be no trial of our obedience, without some difficulty in our duty, either by reason of powerful temptations from without, or of cross and perverse inclinations from within. *Thirdly*, That God hath provided an universal remedy for the degeneracy and weakness of human nature. *The grace of God hath abounded to all men by Jesus Christ*, to enable them to master and subdue all the bad inclinations of nature: as he commands us to examine, so he affords us sufficient aids of his grace by Jesus Christ for our recovery, at least, so far as he will accept of.

"Others object, that the laws of the Christian religion intrench too much upon the pleasures and liberties of human nature. But such do not consider, *first*, that the Christian religion does not hinder the reasonable, just, and proper satisfaction of any of our natural appetites and passions, but the undue and irregular manner of gratifying them; and every inordinate appetite or affection is a punishment to itself; as intemperance, debauchery, revenge, &c. For, as sensual excess goes beyond the limits of nature, so it begets bodily pains and diseases; as it transgresseth the rules of reason and religion, it breeds guilt and remorse in the mind. *Secondly*, As for the restraint of our liberty, the contrary is most evidently true, that sin and evil are the

greatest slavery; for he is a slave who is not at liberty to follow his own judgment, and to do those things he is inwardly convinced are best for him to do, but is subject to the unreasonable commands, and the tyrannical power and violence of his lusts and passions: but the service of God, and obedience to his laws, is perfect liberty, because the law of God requires nothing of us but what is recommended to us by our own reason, and from the benefit and advantage of doing it!.”

SECTION VI.

Since the Church of Rome forbids the common people to read the holy Scriptures, we may enquire, what reason there is nevertheless that they should read and understand them.

IN answer to which it may be considered, *first*, The Scriptures themselves were at first, by the inspiration and providence of God, published in a language which was understood by all those who were concerned; as the Old Testament, which was manifested to the Jews, was written in Hebrew, and part of it in Chaldee, their proper language; and the New Testament was written in Greek, because at the time of publishing it the Greek language was universally understood; which is a plain indication, that God intended his holy word should be read and understood by all the members of his church.

Secondly, What belongs to holy living, (in respect to God, our neighbour, and ourselves,) and what we are to believe in order to salvation, is plainly enough set down in holy Scripture; and for the more obscure and difficult passages, we may repair to the ministers for instruction; or those places may not be of much concern to private persons of ordinary capacities.

¹ See more at large in Archbishop Tillotson's Works, fol. vol. i. serm. x.

Thirdly, The people of the Jews were commanded to read the Old Testament^f; and in many respects we are as much concerned as they; and the New Testament is no more difficult to us, than the Old was to them.

Fourthly, The Apostle St. Paul gave orders that his Epistle should be read to all the holy brethren^g, that is, to all the members of the Christian church. And though many have abused and wrested the holy Scriptures, (as St. Peter complained in his days^h;) yet the Apostle did not therefore forbid them to be read, no more than clothes, and food, and strong liquors are forbidden, though many do abuse them. The Apostle, on the contrary, ordered the whole church of the Colossians to be careful, that the word of God might dwell among them richlyⁱ. And the ancient doctors of the church were wont to call on the people, not excepting “the meanest and most unlearned, to provide themselves Bibles, and to read and meditate in them, in their private houses, because they contain the physic of their souls, and the rules of Christian behaviour, in all conditions here on earth^k.” And they say, that a Christian’s living here in the world without being acquainted with the holy Scriptures, especially of the New Testament, is “like a soldier going to war without his armour^l.” And yet they well knew there are many passages therein not easy to be understood, and that many had perverted the same to their own destruction, upon which pretence the Church of Rome now forbids to the common people the use of the Bible; yet from the beginning it was not so, but all were allowed, nay, enjoined, to have Bibles, and to be well acquainted with them; insomuch, that in the time of the Diocletian persecution, (three hundred and three years after the birth of Christ,) it was looked on as a renouncing Christ and his religion, to be a Traditor^m, that is, for Christians to deliver their Bibles to

^f Deut. vi. 6. ^g 1 Thess. v. 27. ^h 2 Pet. iii. 16. ⁱ Coloss. iii. 16.

^k Gerhardi Exegesis de Script. Sacr. c. 23. Du Pin on the Canon of Scripture, b. i. c. 9. §. 2, 3. ^l Ibid. ^m Augustinus de Baptismo, lib. vii. c. 2. Traditio Codicum facta est, unde cœperunt appellari Traditores. Vide et Martyrologium Romanum, Jan. 2.

the heathen officers, who were sent to burn them: which plain matter of fact is a most convincing argument for the general reading of the holy Scriptures in the primitive times. And if it be objected, that many heresies have sprung up by a wrong interpretation of Scripture; we answer, those mistakes were for want of a thorough acquaintance with the holy Scriptures, and because they were not often read and compared together: besides, the heresies for the most part were coined by doctors and learned men, not ordinary lay persons. *Lastly*, the goodness of God permits us not to question, but that the way to eternal life shall be manifested to those who seek it in his holy word, with all sincerity, without any worldly designs, and with hearty prayers for his aid. Thus much for the obligations which all sorts of persons lie under to be conversant in the holy Scriptures.

SECTION VII.

Next we are to observe what hinders many from profiting by this holy book, and how it ought to be read.

SOME read only to satisfy their curiosity in respect to the stories, or else perplex themselves with the mysterious and dark prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation, and neglect the other plain and most useful parts of the holy Scriptures, which tend most to edification. Others take a piece of a chapter or a verse by itself, never considering the scope and coherence of such words. Another sort have entertained a particular opinion, which they have beforehand resolved to maintain, and bring it with them as a clue, by which to unfold the Scripture. But we should read and meditate in this holy book, not so much to satisfy our curiosity in knowing the several histories, as to observe in them the providence of God, his power and goodness, and care for his church; the pious examples of holy persons, the examples of vengeance against such sins, or the instances of blessings on the performance of such duties, &c. And let the unlearned and weak be most conversant in the plainest and

most edifying books of holy Scripture: neither let us read carelessly, and run away with a verse or two, but compare and consider the end and chief design of the Holy Ghost. *Lastly*, we should not bring our opinions as the clue by which to unfold Scripture, but to be tried and regulated by it; and, above all views, read chiefly to be wise unto salvation; for the Scriptures are not only the oracles of God, to which we should resort for wisdom and saving knowledge, but also a rule and guide of life, which we should have a recourse to, that we may thereby grow the better Christians, more holy and truly religious. In short, the Scripture should be read with the like spirit with which it was writtenⁿ, with a disposition to know and embrace the truth, for promoting the glory of God, a religious conversation, and eternal happiness. To this purpose let us lay up in our hearts what we read, as may be useful on several occasions; as when we read of the power and justice of God, his threatenings against sin, and of his being present in all places, &c. such passages we may treasure up in our hearts, to make us fear and tremble to offend him by presumptuous sins. When we read the exhortations and encouragements to piety and virtue, we should then examine if our behaviour is suitable, and endeavour it may be so for the future. When we read of his goodness and mercy to be over all his works, his gracious promises of mercy and forgiveness, and that he so loved us as to send his Son to die for us, &c. this may cherish our hopes of pardon on our true repentance. When we read that he is a Father to his servants, and will make all things work together for good to them, and that Christ Jesus, his beloved Son, endured the cross, &c. this will be of great comfort to us in the day of affliction and trouble. Thus we should read the holy Scripture, remembering always, that it is God and his Son Jesus Christ who speaks unto us from heaven; and that by this very word, according as we have here improved in knowledge and religious behaviour, we shall all be judged at the last day. This end of reading the Scriptures is excel-

ⁿ Omnis Scriptura sacra eo spiritu debet legi, quo scripta est. Kempis, lib. i. c. 5.

lently expressed by our Church, in her Homily concerning the exhortation to the knowledge and reading of the holy Scriptures, part i. "In reading of God's word, he most profiteth not always that is most ready in turning of the book, but he that is most turned into it, that is, most inspired with the Holy Ghost, most in his heart and life altered and changed into the thing which he readeth. He that is daily less and less proud, less wrathful, less covetous, and less desirous of worldly and vain pleasures. He that daily, forsaking his old and vicious life, increaseth in virtue more and more." O! let us adore and bless God, who hath revealed to us the word of life and salvation, and be careful so to read and meditate in the same, praying for the assistance of his Holy Spirit, that our understandings may be enlightened, our faith confirmed, our hope cherished, our lives reformed, and our souls saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Amen.

SECTION VIII.

The titles and divisions of the holy Bible, and the books which make up the canon of the holy Scripture.

THIS book is called the *Bible*, that is, the *Book*, for Bible is the same^a with Book; as much as to say the Book of books, or the chiefest book; and the *holy Bible*, because it is inspired by God, and contains holy matters, and instructs in holiness. Again, it is called the *Scriptures*, which signifies the writings, because it contains the chiefest of all writings; and the *Word of God*, as proceeding from him, and taught by his Holy Spirit; and lastly, the *Old and New Testament*, which word testament^b not only signifies one's last will, (as it may in this case^c, Christ having made his church the heir of salvation,) but is taken sometimes for a *law*, and then it means the old law given by Moses, and the new law given by Christ:

^a Biblia, plur. a Βιβλος. ^b Διαθηκη. Casaubon. exerc. 16. anni 34. num. 35.
Du Pin's Hist. of the Canon, vol. i. chap. i. §. 1. ^c Heb. ix. 16.

sometimes, and usually, for a *covenant*, and so it signifies the old covenant God made with the Jews, to be their God, on condition of observing his law, and the new covenant he makes with us Christians, a covenant of grace and salvation through Jesus Christ, on condition of faith and obedience. It also signifies the *sign* of this new covenant, *this cup is the New Testament in my blood*^d, or the symbol, sign, or token of that blood, in which the new covenant was established, and so figuratively imports the testament or covenant itself.

The whole Bible is divided into the Old and New Testament; the Old contains the state of the church of God among the Jews; the New containing the doctrine and privilege of the Christian church over all the world. We Christians are concerned with the Old Testament, not only by reason of the examples, judgments, mercies, promises, threatenings, and commands of God therein mentioned; but chiefly in respect to the types, and figures, and prophecies concerning the Messiah and Saviour.

Again, the Old Testament was divided by the Jewish rabbies (or doctors) into three parts^e, the Law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa, (or holy writings.) Our Lord, no doubt, alluded to this division, Luke xxiv. 44. *in the Law, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms*, (or holy writings, of which the Psalms are a chief part,) *concerning me*, and thereby confirmed the Jewish canon, or catalogue of books of the Old Testament.

First, The Law, containing the five books of Moses, which the Greeks afterwards called the Pentateuch; which word signifies the five-fold volume, because it contains five books, *viz.* Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

Secondly, The Prophets: these they reckoned eight, in this order; Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the twelve lesser Prophets accounted as one book, *viz.* Hosea, Joel, Amos, and the rest, to the end of Malachi. So that although the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and

^d Luke xxii. 20.

^e Hotting. Thesaur. l. ii. c. 1. §. 1. compared with Lightfoot, Horæ in Luc. xxiv. 44.

Kings, are properly historical, yet they were accounted in the class of the prophetical, as being written by men who were prophets, describing things already past, as others foretold things to come.

Thirdly, Hagiographa, (or holy writings,) in the order following, Ruth, Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Lamentations, Daniel, Esther, Ezra, (to which last Nehemiah was annexed,) and Chronicles^f. So that although David and Daniel were prophets, and foretold things to come, yet they were not reckoned in the class of the prophets, because they did not live as those prophets did, David being a king, and Daniel a courtier. This last part, the holy writings, were accounted divinely inspired, and therefore the Jews call them holy; but they are by them distinguished from the other books or prophets^g, because the writers of them had no public mission, or office of prophets; and they conceive them dictated not by dreams, visions, a voice, or otherwise, as were the oracles of the prophets, but more immediately revealed to the minds of the authors: neither were they read publicly in their synagogues, as the Law and the Prophets were: hence, as some think, the expression, *This is the Law and the Prophets*^h. So *they have Moses and the Prophets*. Again, *if they hear not Moses and the Prophets*ⁱ.

Another reason is suggested^k, why the Jews still exclude the prophet Daniel from being read in their synagogues, *viz.* because he so clearly defines the time of the coming and death of the Messiah, before the destruction of the city and sanctuary, or temple^l; and they had rather this prophet be not so publicly read, than that the reading of him should at any time encourage some in, and bring others over to, the belief of the person and doctrine of Jesus Christ.

Josephus mentions another, and possibly a more ancient division of the Old Testament^m, although not altogether

^f Hotting. Thesaur. l. ii. c. 1. §. 1. compared with Lightfoot, Horæ in Luc. xxiv. 44.

^g Bishop Cosin on the Canon of Scripture, ch. 2. Hottinger, *ibid.* lib. ii. c. i. §. 3.

^h Matt. vii. 12. ⁱ Luke xvi. 31. Acts xxiv. 14. xxvi. 22. ^k Hottinger, *ibid.* p. 510.

^l Ch. ix. ^m Contra Apion. lib. i. non longe ab initio. Compare Grot. in Luc. xxiv. 44.

unlike the former; and because he lived soon after Christ's time, probably that division obtained then. He reckons two and twenty books in the whole; of which he says, "five of Moses contain laws, and treat of the creation of the world, and the generation of mankind, and so to the death of Moses;" by which it is plain he means the Pentateuch, containing Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Next he mentions "the Prophets, from the death of Moses to the reign of Artaxerxes, comprehending thirteen books," viz. all the historical, reckoned in the class of prophetic, (for the reason above mentioned,) as Joshua, Judges, &c. to the end of Nehemiah, including also Esther and Job; and also the prophetic books, strictly so called, as Isaiah, Jeremiah, &c. to the end of Malachi: but he doth not mention how he reckoned them, nor how many were accounted one book: and, lastly, he places the "other four books, containing holy hymns and moral precepts," by which, doubtless, he means the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles. By *the Law and the Prophets*, Christ might intend the two first classes which Josephus mentions. Sometimes the Law, among the Jews, comprehended the whole Scripture of the Old Testament: thus, *they heard out of the Law that Christ abideth for ever*ⁿ; which they might gather from Dan. vii. 14. or Psalm lxxxix. 35, 36. or Psalm ex. 4. but not from the Law, strictly so called: and Christ, quoting Psalm xxxv. 19. *they hate me without a cause*, says, it was *written in their Law*^o; and by *the Psalms*, as quoted by Christ^p, might be meant the whole volume of the *holy writings*, wherein the Psalms carried the name of all the four, (either because first placed, or as esteemed most for the prophecies of the Messiah,) viz. Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles^r.

The modern division of the Old Testament is into four parts: *first*, The Pentateuch, or five books of Moses, as Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. *Secondly*, The historical books, as Joshua, Judges, &c. to the

ⁿ Luke xxiv. 44.^o John xii. 34.^p John xv. 25.^q Luke xxiv. 44.^r Lightfoot Hor. in Luc. xxiv. 44.

end of Esther. *Thirdly*, The five poetical^a books, *viz.* Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles. *Fourthly*, The Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, &c. to the end of Malachi^b.

The other books are called Apocrypha, which word signifies *hidden writings*. It is supposed they were so called, because their original is obscure, and authority questionable; but a person^v learned in the Jewish authors gives another account, which seems probable: he observes, that the Jews termed these books that were not canonical, (or not of divine authority,) *ganuzim*, (which the Greeks rightly interpret *apocrypha*, or hidden;) because, to prevent an occasion of error in any that should read them, they were wont to keep them for a private use, or hide or bury them in the earth; whence their reckoning them in the number of such as were not divinely inspired, was expressed by their being *apocrypha*, or hidden.

These books contain the latter history of the Jews, and many good exhortations and rules of manners: but are not of divine authority, because not written originally in the holy language, or Hebrew, by prophets or inspired persons, but after the time of Artaxerxes Longimanus and Ezra, when the spirit of prophecy ceased in the Jewish church; or, as Josephus expresses it, “for want of the successional line and descent of the prophets to make them still more authentic and sacred^w.” Neither were they inserted into the canon of holy Scripture by Ezra^x.

There were more books once among the Jews than those hitherto mentioned, which related to their religion and government, and which are cited, Numb. xxi. 14. Josh. x. 13. 1 Kings xi. 41. and elsewhere. But then, those which are preserved are sufficient for the use of the church, otherwise the Divine Providence would not have suffered the rest to be lost. Nor is the canon of the Old Testament deficient on that account, because Christ and his Apostles acquiesced therein as

^a See what is said of the Hebrew poetry on the book of Psalms.
et Tremellius secundum veteres Christianos.

^b Junius Hottinger. Thesaurus, lib. ii.

c. 2. §. 1.

^w Josephus, *ibid.* and Hottinger, *ibid.* a. p. 523.

^x *Ibid.*

perfect, and as being entirely what was constituted by Ezra as a prophet, and the rest of the great council in his time^γ.

The New Testament is divided into three parts; *first*, The holy Gospel, containing the doctrine, life, and death of Christ, &c. *Secondly*, The history of the first preaching of the Gospel, and planting of the Christian church, in the Acts of the Apostles. *Thirdly*, The writings of St. Paul, and some other Apostles; as the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, and the rest, to the end of the Revelation. The books of the Old and New Testament above mentioned (except the Apocrypha) are called canonical, from a Greek word signifying a rule or limit measured out, as being a catalogue or list of such books as contain the rule or measure of faith.

As for the divisions of the Bible by chapters and verses, we may note, in the first place, that the Jews were wont to divide the books of the Law and the Prophets, (which were read publicly in their synagogues,) into so many parts or sections, called *paraschal*; and those again were subdivided into lesser ones, called *sedarim*, for the convenient reading them in their synagogues on the sabbath-days^z: and these sections somewhat resemble our Chapters, Epistles, and Gospels. Some of the ancient Christians had general titles, or chief heads, to point out the contents of such a portion of holy Scripture^a, the like as in our Bibles are noted with a paragraph, or note of division, thus ¶. But the divisions by chapters, such as we have now, except the Psalms^b, was an invention of one Hugo, a cardinal, (who flourished about the year 1240,) for the ready finding the words and phrases in the Scripture of the vulgar Latin Bible, by a concordance, which he had composed. About the year 1430, a Jewish Rabbi, Nathan, imitated that division by chapters in the Hebrew Bible, (for which he contrived a concordance,) and improved it, by subdividing the chapters of the Old Testament into verses: which example

^γ Hottinger. Thesaurus, lib. ii. c. 2. §. 2. p. 539. As for the pretences of the Romish Church, in defence of their new Trentine Canon, see Bishop Cosin's Can. ch. i. 2. iii. 4. ^z Hottinger. Thesaurus, lib. i. c. ii. §. 5. num. 1. ^a Στιχομετρίας, Dr. Mill's Prolegom. p. 100. ^b Acts xiii. 33.

was followed by Christians in the Latin Bibles of the Old Testament. Afterwards Robert Stephens, or Stephanus, a famous printer at Paris, in France, and learned in the Greek language, when he had composed a concordance for the Greek Testament, about the year 1546, taking a hint from the forementioned division of the chapters into verses of the Old Testament, made a like division of the chapters of the New Testament into verses also^c: which division by chapters and verses both of the Old and New Testament still continues.

SECTION IX.

BEFORE we enter upon the particular books of the holy Scripture, the following general rules may be observed for the interpretation thereof, *viz.*

First general rule. The holy Scripture speaks *with the tongue of the sons of men*, as the ancient Jews expressed it^d, that is, in condescension to the common usage and apprehensions of men, even of the vulgar as well as the more learned^e, making use of popular expressions, and forms of speech: for when God would vouchsafe to reveal himself to men, he must be supposed to comply with their language and manner of speaking.

1. Thus, according to the sentiments and expressions among men, God is said to *repent* that he had made man, and it *grieved him* at his heart^f. Not that God hath an heart or body, or can repent or grieve, as we do, for want of a foresight of events, and the disappointments consequent thereon; but because, when men repent of an action, they would undo it; so when God resolved to destroy so many of mankind whom he had created, he is said to repent, or to grieve that he had made them. So^g Christ is said to *marvel* at the centurion's

^c Præfatio Buxtorf. ad Concordantias Bibliorum Hebraicas, apud Dr. Prideaux's Old and New Testament connected, part i. book 5. compare Hottinger. Thesaurus, lib. i. c. ii. §. 5. p. 223. ^d Secundum linguam filiorum hominum, Maimon. Mor. Nevoch. pars i. c. 26. ^e Origen. contra Celsum ad initium. ^f Gen. vi. 6.

^g Matt. viii. 10.

answer, because he seemed as one that doth so: and God is said to lead the Israelites forty years in the wilderness, that he might *prove* and *know* them; because we often know things or persons upon making trial^e. For want of observing this rule, many passages of Scripture, which seem to represent God like unto men, have occasioned a gross and dangerous mistake, which ordinary readers have sometimes fallen into: because they find human passions and the parts of a human body ascribed to God, they have been apt to imagine him like an old king sitting on his throne; whereas his glorious Majesty is infinite and incomprehensible: and those passages in holy Scripture which seem to represent God like unto men, are gracious condescensions to our frail capacities and understandings. For example, because we cannot apprehend how any one should see and hear without eyes and ears, therefore it is said, *the eyes of the Lord* are over the righteous, and *his ears* are open to their cry; not that he hath eyes, or a body, who is an infinite glorious Spirit, and hath given us the faculties of sight and hearing; and therefore cannot but discern and know all things himself. But this is said in condescension to us, who should not otherwise comprehend God's knowledge and observation of mortal men. So that expression, *the Lord's hand* is not shortened that it cannot save, nor *his ear* heavy that it cannot hear, doth not mean that he hath hands or ears, but that he fully apprehends and understands all our wants, and is ready to help us. In the same manner David prays^f, Lord, lift thou up the light of thy *face* or *countenance* upon us, that is, be favourable to us. So God is said to be *angry*, and to have *fury*, &c. to make us apprehend how much he hates sin, and will punish sinners.

2. Again, human authors very often use figurative expressions, which are not understood as the words strictly sound, but according to custom, and the common phrase and apprehensions of mankind. And in respect to this, we are often to interpret the holy Scriptures; for example^g, the pastures *are clothed with flocks*, that is, filled with them, and the valleys

^e Deut. viii. 2.

^f Psalm iv. 6.

^g Psalm lxx. 13.

shout for joy; they also sing^b, are very fruitful, and make the owners rejoice. ¹The *rock* of salvation, that is, the strength of, or sure salvation. Christ commands^k to *pluck out our right eye, or cut off our right hand*, if they offend us, or prove the occasion of sin; signifying thereby, that we should quit all occasion of lust, rather denying ourselves the use of our eyes or hands, when they would ensnare us in sin. He also orders the Apostles to preach upon the *house-tops*^l, *viz.* openly and publicly. The Apostles are called *the light of the world*^m, that is, to enlighten men's minds by their instructions and examples. Our life is a *vapour*ⁿ, because frail and suddenly vanishing. Christ says^o, I am the *door*, because by him we become members of the church of God. So, I am the *good shepherd*^p, who spiritually governs and feeds his church and people with his holy Spirit and holy doctrine unto eternal life. ^qLet us build a tower, whose top may *reach unto heaven*, or very high. So, ^rthe cities are *walled up to heaven*. So, on the contrary^s, thou Capernaum, which art exalted up to heaven, shalt be brought *down to hell*, reduced to a very low state. ^tLet the *dead*, those who are unconcerned and dead to the things of God and of heaven, bury their dead. ^uThe *maid is not dead, but sleepeth*; that is, not so dead but that she shall be raised to life, as out of a sleep. Christ is the head of the church, or the chief thereof, to support and govern it by his holy word and Spirit; and true Christians make up that *one body*, as being united to the head, and governed thereby^v. God is said to *crown* the year with his goodness^w, because he adorns and blesses the land with plenty at the proper seasons of the year. Christians are *crucified* to the world^x, because the honours, riches, or pleasures of it are become lifeless and untempting to them. God is said to break the whole *staff of bread*^y, forasmuch as bread supports a man, as a staff does one that is infirm. The

^b *Læta seges. Virg.* ¹ Deut. xxxii. 15. ^k Matt. xviii. 8, 9. ^l Matt. x. 27.
^m Matt. v. 14. ⁿ James iv. 14. ^o John x. 9. ^p John x. 14. ^q Gen.
xi. 4. ^r Deut. i. 28. ^s Matt. xi. 23. ^t Matt. viii. 22. ^u Matt. ix. 24.
^v Ephes. i. 22, 23. ^w Psalm lxv. 11. ^x Gal. vi. 14. ^y Psal. cv. 16.

devil is called *the god of this world*^z; so elsewhere, the *ruler of the darkness* of this world, and the *prince of the power of the air*, as having a sort of dominion over those in the world who yield themselves to his temptations, and thereby become subjects to him.

We may add to these figurative expressions, the method among the ancients in the eastern countries, of conveying their notions to their disciples by allegories and types, whereby one thing was expressed and represented, and another alluded to or implied: this was a very common way among the Egyptians, Persians, and Indians, as well as the Jews, as appears by their monuments^a: and therefore we are not to wonder that the same is used in the holy Scriptures, by those writers who lived in the eastern parts of the world.

3. As there are several idioms or proprieties of speech in all languages, so there are in the Hebrew language^b, wherein the Old Testament was mostly written, which are different in sound from our own. These are often noted in the margin of our Bibles, and sometimes imitated in the New Testament also; forasmuch as the writers thereof were of Jewish extraction, and the first Christians were so too, for whose sake the books therein contained were at first written. So that we are not to wonder that we find a great many proprieties and forms of speech, that peculiarly belong to the Hebrew language of the Old Testament, to be used in the New, although it was written in the Greek tongue. Thus much being observed, divers passages of the holy Scriptures will be easier understood, as in the following instances.

4. Where there are more of the same kind, what is meant only of one^c, is sometimes spoken of all; as when the particular is included in the general. ^dThe ark rested upon the *mountains*^e of Ararat, that is, one of the mountains. Or when it was known what was meant^f, God overthrew the

^z 2 Cor. iv. 4. ^a Mede Commentat. Apocalyp. pars i. in Appendice ad finem sigilli 6, sic Maimon. Mor. Nevoch. pars iii. c. 43. illa docendi ratio, illis temporibus, admodum fuit trita et usitata.

^b Of this a large account is given by Glassius, in his Philolog. Sacra.

^c Enallage numeri.

^d Gen. viii. 4.

^e So we say, Such corn grows on the hills.

^f Gen. xix. 29.

cities, that city in which Lot dwelt. ^g When his disciples saw it, *they* had indignation; it was one of them, viz. Judas ^h. Again, ⁱ Lest that come upon you, which is spoken by the *prophets*, that is, Habakkuk ^k. The apostle says of the prophets and faithful of old, ^l *who* stopped the mouths of lions, which is only recorded of Daniel. Or, *lastly*, because it signified little to name the particular in such place. ^m The *thieves* cast the same in his teeth, that is, one of them ⁿ.

5. When the Jews would set forth the greatness or excellency of any thing, they would say, it is *divine*, or of *God*. So ^o thou art a *mighty* prince, in the Hebrew, a prince of *God*. And ^p *great* mountains, Hebrew, the mountains of *God*^q. This propriety is sometimes preserved in our translation, as, ^r *the river of God*, is a river full of water, and greatly enriching. ^s *The garden of the Lord*, that is, well watered and fruitful. ^t Moses was *exceeding fair*, in the Greek, *fair to God*.

6. The superlative, or highest degree, is in Hebrew expressed by the repetition of a word; as what is translated ^u *most desolate*, is in the Hebrew *desolation and desolation*. ^v *Exceeding deep*, Hebrew, *deep deep*. ^w *To all generations*, Hebrew, *to generation and generation*. ^x And for our translation, ^y *Is thine heart right?* Jehonadab answered, *It is*, Hebrew, *It is and it is*, that is, *exceedingly right*. ^z *Most holy*, Hebrew, *holy of holies*. Hence we read, ^a *a servant of servants*, that is, the meanest servant. So ^b *God of gods*, for the supreme God. In like manner, *heaven of heavens*, the highest heaven. *Vanity of vanities*, for the most vain. *Song of songs*, for the most excellent song. In the same manner, the particle *among* is sometimes used, as ^c brutish *among* the people, that is, most brutish. ^d Fair *among* women, the fairest ^e. ^f Blessed art thou *among* women, most blessed.

^g Matt. xxvi. 8. ^h John xii. 4. ⁱ Acts xiii. 40. ^k Hab. i. 5. ^l Heb. xi. 33. ^m Matt. xxvii. 44. ⁿ Luke xxiii. 39. ^o Gen. xxiii. 6. ^p Psalm xxxvi. 6. ^q So 1 Sam. xiv. 15. Jonah iii. 3, &c. ^r Psal. lxxv. 9. ^s Gen. xiii. 10. ^t Acts vii. 20. ^u Ezek. xxxiii. 28. ^v Eccl. vii. 24. ^w Psal. lxxix. 13. ^x So 1 Sam. ii. 3. Micah ii. 4. ^y 2 Kings x. 15. ^z Exod. xxvi. 33. ^a Gen. ix. 25. ^b Deut. x. 17. ^c Psal. xciv. 8. ^d Cant. i. 8. ^e So Jer. xlix. 15. ^f Luke i. 28.

7. There are some *particular words* in the Hebrew language which have a peculiar signification; for example, *shalom*, or *peace*; as what we read, *is he well*, or *safe*^f? is in the Hebrew, *is there peace to him*^g? Insomuch, that a wishing *peace* to any one was a usual salutation, as with us, a wishing all kind of health and prosperity, which cannot render one happy without peace. Thus what is read^h, *and saluted him*, is in Hebrew, *asked him of peace*ⁱ. Hence in our translation^k, the salutation, *Peace be to thee, and peace be to thine house, &c.* is a wishing of the continuance of prosperity. So ^l*the Lord give thee peace, make thee happy.* And ^m*I give unto him my covenant of peace*, to make him and his family prosperous. ⁿ*The mountains shall bring peace*, that is, plenty and happiness^o. And thus we understand^p, when ye come into an house, *salute it*, that is, wish it *peace*, or happiness; for it follows, *and if the house be not worthy, let your peace*, or good wish, *return to you*, they shall receive no advantage from it^q.

8. The word *man*, in Hebrew, is sometimes used to signify as follows. ^rWhat is translated *eloquent*, is in Hebrew, *a man of words*. ^s*A bloody man*, Hebrew, *a man of blood*^t. This propriety is often retained; as ^u*a man of war*, for warlike or stout; and *a man of Belial*, (or of wickedness,) for wicked and injurious. ^v*A man of sorrows*, for sorrowful^w.

9. The words *sons*, *daughters*, *children*, and *virgins*, have also in the Hebrew language a peculiar signification; as sometimes by redounding, or signifying only what follows them; thus, what is translated^x, *O ye mighty*, is in Hebrew, *sons of the mighty*. Hence ^y*the daughter* of my people, signifies only *my people*. And ^z*the children* of strangers, is no more than *strangers*. And ^a*the children of Ammon*, means

^f Gen. xxix. 6. ^g So Gen. xxxvii. 14. xlili. 7. ² Sam. xviii. 28, 29. Esth. ii. 11. Zech. viii. 10, &c. ^h Judges xviii. 15. ¹ 1 Sam. x. 4. ² Kings x. 13, &c. ^k 1 Sam. xxv. 6. ^l Numb. vi. 26. ^m Numb. xxv. 12. ⁿ Psal. lxxii. 3. ^o As verse 7. See also Isa. xxxviii. 17. Lam. iii. 17. ^p Matt. x. 12, 13. ^q See also Luke xix. 42. Ephes. vi. 23, &c. (See the Appendix, No. 19.) ^r Exod. iv. 10. ^s 2 Sam. xvi. 7. ^t See also Gen. xxxiv. 30. Job xxii. 8. ^u 1 Sam. xvi. 18. ^v Isaiah liii. 3, 4. ^w So Jer. xv. 10, &c. ^x Psal. xxix. 1. ^y Isa. xxii. 4. ^z Isa. ii. 6. ^a Isa. xi. 14.

the Ammonites, or the people of Ammon. And ^b *the virgin daughter of my people*, that is, my people. ^c *The virgin daughter of Zion*, and ^d *O virgin daughter of Babylon*, for those cities of Zion and Babylon. If the name of any quality, &c. be added, it signifies a person endued therewith ^e. ^f *Strong men*, Hebrew, *sons of strength*. So ^g Hebrew, *a son of valour*, for valiant. Hence, ^h *children of Belial*, (or wickedness,) for wicked. ⁱ *Children of the world*, for worldly men; and *children of light*, that is, enlightened. ^k *Children of disobedience*, for disobedient persons.

If a *reward* or *punishment* follows either of those words, then it signifies *worthy of*, or *designed for it*; as ^l what we read, *he shall surely die*, is in the Hebrew, he is *the son of death*. And ^m *those that are appointed to die*, in Hebrew, *the children of death*. Hence, ⁿ *the son of peace*, that is, worthy to partake of the true peace, which the Apostles preached ^o. So also ^p *the children of wrath*, that is, liable to wrath and destruction. ^q *The son of perdition*, that is, Judas given up to perdition. ^r *The children of the promise*, those to whom the promise was made.

When the name of that which *possesses* or *holds* any thing follows either of those words, then it signifies what is so possessed or held: thus, what is translated ^s *the arrows of his quiver*, is in the Hebrew, the *sons* of his quiver. And ^t the towns that were subject or belonged to any city, are in Hebrew called *daughters*; as Ekron with her *towns*, Hebrew, *daughters*; Ashdod with her *towns*, Hebrew *daughters*. And ^u the *people* of the east, in Hebrew, *children* of the east. So ^v the *sons* of the army, for soldiers. Hence if the name of a place or people be added in our translation, then it signifies the inhabitants of that place, or those who belonged to, or came from it: thus ^w *the children of Zion*, signify the inhabitants of Jerusalem, which was built partly on mount Zion.

^b Jer. xiv. 17. ^c Isa. xxxvii. 22. ^d Isa. xlvii. 1. ^e Judges ii. 16. ^f 2 Kings ii. 16. ^g 1 Sam. xviii. 17. ^h Deut. xiii. 13. ⁱ Luke xvi. 8. ^k Ephes. ii. 2. ^l 1 Sam. xx. 31. ^m Psal. cii. 20. ⁿ Luke x. 6. ^o Compare Matt. x. 13. ^p Ephes. ii. 3. ^q John xvii. 12. ^r Gal. iv. 28. ^s Lam. iii. 13. ^t Josh. xv. 45—47. ^u Gen. xxix. 1. ^v 2 Chron. xxv. 13. ^w Psalm cxlix. 2.

Thus also in the prophets, as before observed, *the daughters of Babylon, the daughters of Jerusalem, the daughters of Tyre*, signify the persons who inhabited those places. ^w *The children of the captivity*, for those who were captives. ^x *The children of the kingdom*, that is, who belonged to the church or kingdom of God. ^y *The children of the bridechamber*, mean the friends of the bridegroom, who were conversant and feasted with him.

10. The *soul* being the principal part of man, it signifies in the Hebrew a *person*, or man himself: thus, ^z give me the *persons*, is in Hebrew, give me the *souls*; and ^a Esau took his wives, and all the *persons* of his house, in Hebrew, all the *souls*. ^b *He* was laid in iron, Hebrew, *his soul* came into iron. ^c This propriety is retained where it is said, ^d And Abraham took Sarah his wife, and *the souls* that they had gotten: so ^e, sixteen *souls*, that is, sons or persons: and in the prophets, ^f thus might we procure great evil against *our souls*, or against ourselves. And in the New Testament, ^g we were in all two hundred threescore and sixteen *souls*, or persons. ^h Wherein few, that is, *eight souls*, or persons, were saved. Thus the *heart* of man, being supposed the seat of wisdom, courage, joy, sorrow, &c. denotes those qualities and affections themselves. ⁱ Whoso committeth adultery, *lacketh understanding*, Hebrew, *lacketh an heart*. Hence ^k *Jacob's heart* fainted. ^l *A merry heart* maketh a cheerful countenance; but by sorrow of *the heart* the spirit is broken.

Also the *face*, and *head*, and *hand*, are often put in the Hebrew for a person himself; as, ^m see I have *accepted thee*, is in Hebrew, I have *accepted thy face*. So ⁿ what we read, *the Lord* accepted *Job*, is in Hebrew, *accepted the face of Job*. ^o *To every man a damsel*, Hebrew, *to the head of every man*. ^p The Lord hath cried *by the prophets*, Hebrew, *by the hands of the prophets*. This propriety is often retained elsewhere.

^w Ezra iv. 1.^x Matt. viii. 12.^y Matt. ix. 15.^z Gen. xiv. 21.^a Gen. xxxvi. 6.^b Psal. cv. 18.^c So Esther ix. 31. and elsewhere veryoften. ^d Gen. xii. 5. ^e Gen. xlvi. 18. ^f Jer. xxvi. 19. ^g Acts xxvii. 37.^h 1 Pet. iii. 20.ⁱ Prov. vi. 32.^k Gen. xlv. 26.^l Prov. xv. 13.^m Gen.

xix. 21.

ⁿ Job xlii. 9.^o Judg. v. 30.^p Zech. vii. 7.

So, ^a Thou shalt honour *the face of the old man*, means, thou shalt honour *the old man*. ^r Look upon *the face of thine Anointed*, or have regard to thine Anointed. ^s I send my messenger before *thy face*, or before thee. ^t Blessings are upon *the head of the just*, or upon the just. ^u Joy upon *their heads*, upon them. ^v Your blood be upon *your own heads*, upon yourselves. ^w The kingdom was established *in the hand of Solomon*, that is, in Solomon. ^x Send *by the hand* of him, that is, by him.

11. The *eye*, being the outward instrument of sight, often denotes the inward mind or judgment. ^y If it *seem hard* (or displeasing) *unto thee*, Hebrew, *in thine eyes*. Hence, ^z when thou wast little in thine *own sight*, or esteem. ^a Eat not the bread of him that hath an *evil eye*, is of an envious, covetous, and grudging mind. ^b Is *thine eye evil*? or art thou envious and discontented, because I am good? ^c Out of the heart proceed thefts, covetousness, an *evil eye*, envy, or discontent at others' enjoyments.

12. So also the *arm*, being the chief instrument of a man's exercising his strength, is put for help and power, or strength itself. ^d Until I have shewed thy strength, in Hebrew, thine *arm*: and ^e the greatness of thy power, Hebrew, of thine *arm*. ^f The *mighty man*, Hebrew, man *of the arm*. Hence, ^g I will cut off *thine arm*, and *the arm* of thy father's house; that is, the whole strength and power of thyself and family. ^h The *high arm*, or greatest strength, is broken. ⁱ Break thou *the arm*, or power, of the wicked, &c.

13. To be *set on high*, signifies to be made safe and secure: thus, ^k the Lord will be *a refuge* to the oppressed, in Hebrew, an high place. So, ^l *defend me*, Hebrew, set me *on high*. Hence in our translation, ^m Let thy salvation, O God, *set me on high*, shield and defend me. ⁿ He shall be exalted, and be *very high*, be secured from danger.

^q Levit. xix. 32. ^r Psal. lxxxiv. 9. ^s Matt. xi. 10. ^t Prov. x. 6. ^u Isa. xxxv. 10. ^v Acts xviii. 6. ^w 1 Kings ii. 46. ^x Exod. iv. 13. ^y Deut. xv. 18. ^z 1 Sam. xv. 17. ^a Prov. xxiii. 6. ^b Matt. xx. 15. ^c Mark vii. 22. ^d Psal. lxxi. 18. ^e Psal. lxxix. 11. ^f Job xxii. 8. ^g 1 Sam. ii. 31. ^h Job xxxviii. 15. ⁱ Psal. x. 15. ^k Psal. ix. 9. ^l Psal. lix. 1. ^m Psal. lxix. 29. ⁿ Isa. lii. 13.

14. The expressions, *going a whoring, committing adultery,* and *playing the harlot,* often signify any wickedness, especially the idolatry of the Jews, because God had, as it were, espoused or married his church by the spiritual covenant he made with them^p. Thus, ^q *Lest thou go a whoring after their gods.* ^r *How is the faithful city become an harlot? righteousness lodged in it, but now murderers.* And ^s *playing the harlot, and committing adultery,* signify the idolatry of Israel and Judah.

15. The number *seven* is frequently used indefinitely, that is, for a great many, without determining the number. ^t *I will punish you seven times more for your sins,* that is, very much and often. ^u *In that day seven women, or many, shall take hold of one man.* ^v *Seven other, or many, spirits more wicked than himself.*

16. The *sun* and *moon,* in the prophets, often signify glory and happiness; and the darkening of them, the contrary calamities; and the increasing of their light, the more abundant glory. ^w *Let them that love him be as the sun.* Hence, ^x *Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; the days of thy mourning shall be ended.* So, ^y *She that hath borne seven languisheth; she hath given up the ghost; her sun is gone down while it was yet day^z.*

17. Because the strength and ornament of divers beasts consist in their horns, therefore, in the Jewish phrase, *the horn* signifies power, courage, glory, and a kingdom. Hence, Hannah praised God ^a; *mine horn is exalted,* that is, my glory and honour, in being delivered from barrenness. Thus also, ^b in thy favour *our horn shall be exalted,* our power and government. This metaphor is often used in the Psalms, and in the Prophets. The expression, ^c *I will make thy horn iron,* signifies, I will make thy power and strength very prevalent.

18. *Parents* and *ancestors* are often put for their sons and

^p Jer. iii. 14. Hosea ii. 2. ^q Exod. xxxiv. 15. ^r Isa. i. 21. ^s Jer. iii. 1, 6, 8, 9. ^t Lev. xxvi. 18. ^u Isa. iv. 1. ^v Matt. xii. 45. ^w Judges v. 31.

^x Isa. lx. 20. ^y Jer. xv. 9. ^z So Amos viii. 9. Isa. v. 30. and xiii. 10, 11.

^a 1 Sam. ii. 1. ^b Psal. lxxxix. 17. ^c Micah iv. 13.

posterity. So Japhet and Shem for their posterity^d. And Jacob and Israel for the people of Israel^e. Thus, 'when the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, *Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.*

19. An *absolute* expression, or a *negative*, hath often the force of a comparison only. [§] When the Lord saw that Leah *was hated*, that is, less beloved. ^h Joseph tells his brethren, It was *not you that sent me hither, but God*; that is, it was more God's providence, than his brethren's contrivance. So ⁱ your murmurings are *not against us*, but against the Lord, that is, rather against the Lord. ^k I desired merey, *and not sacrifice*, that is, rather than sacrifice. ^l And *hate not his father and mother, &c.* does not *love* them *more* than God, so as to neglect his commandments^m. ⁿ Call *not thy friends*, but *call the poor*, that is, prefer charitable entertainments. ^o *Labour not*, that is, not *chiefly*, for the meat that perisheth. ^p *It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle*, or very difficult for a rich man so to behave himself, as to enter into the kingdom of heaven. ^q Christ sent me *not to baptize*, but to preach the Gospel, that is, rather to preach the Gospel. ^r Set your affection on things above, and *not on things on the earth*, that is, more than on things on the earth.

20. When we hear a man's *name*, it makes us think of his person: accordingly, in the holy Scriptures, the *name* of a person is often put for the person himself, and the *name* of God for his own glorious majesty. Thus, ^s that thou mayest fear this *glorious and fearful name*, that is, as it follows, *the Lord thy God*. ^t *Hallowed be thy name*, may thy glorious majesty be honoured and glorified. ^u The number of *names* of persons were about an hundred and twenty. And ^v so whatsoever is said to be *called by the name of God*, it is to be understood as peculiarly owned by him. Thus of the children

^d Gen. ix. 27. ^e Exod. v. 2. ^f Psal. xiv. 7. [§] Gen. xxix. 31. ^h Gen. xlv. 8.
ⁱ Exod. xvi. 8. ^k Hos. vi. 6. ^l Luke xiv. 26. ^m Matt. x. 37. See also Prov.
viii. 10. Micah vi. 6, 7. Jer. vii. 21, 22, 23. Joel ii. 13. Matt. vi. 31, 33. x. 28.
ⁿ Luke xiv. 12, 13. ^o John vi. 27. ^p Matt. xix. 24. ^q 1 Cor. i. 17. ^r Col. iii. 2.
^s Deut. xxviii. 58. So Psal. cxv. 1. Isa. xxx. 27. ^t Matt. vi. 9. ^u Acts i. 15.
^v See Rev. iii. 4.

of Israel; ^v All the people of the earth shall see, that thou art called by the name of the Lord, and they shall be afraid of thee ^w.

21. When an action is said to be *done*, the meaning is often, that it is *declared*, or *permitted*, or *foretold* it shall be done: thus in the Hebrew, (though not marked in the margin of our Bibles,) ^x The priests shall look on him, and *pollute him*^y, in our translation, *pronounce him unclean, or polluted*, Hebrew, *by quickening, or enlivening* him; with us, *by promising him life*^z. Hence, ^a *Me he restored*, that is, foretold or declared to be restored. ^b Ah, Lord God! *thou hast greatly deceived this people*; thou hast shewn or permitted this people to be deceived by their false prophets. ^c To *slay the souls* which should not die, that is, to prophesy, or pronounce falsely, that they should die. ^d I have set thee over the nations *to root out, and to pull down*, to prophesy or declare them pulled down. ^e *I gave them also statutes which were not good, and polluted them in their own gifts*, that is, I gave them up to themselves, and permitted them to receive such statutes (of the heathen), and shewed them to be polluted, and I dealt with them accordingly. ^f *I have hewn them* by the prophets, or foretold they should be hewn or slain. Thus also in the New Testament^g, the Greek signifies, what God hath cleansed, *do not thou pollute*; ^h that is, *call not thou common*, or defiled. Hence, ⁱ Whatsoever thou shalt bind or loose on earth, declare to be so. ^k *Lead us not into temptation*, permit ^l or suffer us not to be overcome by temptation. ^m *The letter kills*, or tends to death. ⁿ *He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts*, left them to themselves to be blind, &c.

^v Deut. xxviii. 10. ^w See also Jer. xxv. 29. ^x Lev. xiii. 3. ^y Vetimnea, v. Ainsworth in loc. who observes further, The ministers of Christ are said to bind and loose, to remit sins, and to retain them, when they certainly declare them so to be by the word of God. ^z Ezek. xiii. 22. ^a Gen. xli. 13. ^b Jer. iv. 10. ^c Ezek. xiii. 19. ^d Jer. i. 10. ^e Ezek. xx. 25, 26. ^f Hosea vi. 5. ^g Acts x. 15. ^h So Matt. xv. 11. ⁱ Matt. xvi. 19. ^k Matt. vi. 13. ^l Compare Glassius Philolog. lib. iii. tract. 3. can. 11. de verbo, quod actionem notat, et intelligendum est de permissione, et Grotius in Matt. vi. 13. de verbis formæ Hiphil. ^m 2 Cor. iii. 6. ⁿ John xii. 40.

Again, by an action said to *be done*, is sometimes meant the *giving an occasion* for it. ° Thus, what is in the Hebrew, ^p thou shalt *burn* this city, is translated, thou shalt *cause this city to be burnt*. Hence, ^q Who *made Israel* to sin, gave occasion for it, by example and command. ^r *Judas purchased a field*, occasioned it to be purchased by his money, which he cast down in the temple. In like manner, ^s *destroy not him*, do not give the occasion for his destruction. ^t Whether thou *shalt save* thy husband, be the occasion of his being saved.

22. When an action is said to *be done*, and *no person mentioned before as the doer of it*, it is to be understood impersonally, or passively: thus ^v, in the Hebrew, And the night in which *he said*, that is, in which it was said. ^x Hebrew, *he shall take up* a parable, means a parable shall be taken up. In the original Greek, ^y this night do *they require* thy soul; but rightly translated, as to the sense, *thy soul shall be required of thee*. Hence, ^z *He hardened Pharaoh's heart*, imports, Pharaoh's heart grew hard, or was hardened. ^a *They shall find* none iniquity, or no iniquity shall be found. ^b And *they* (or *men*) *gather them*, that is, they are gathered.

23. When one is said to *know* any person or thing, thereby is often meant not only a bare knowledge, but also some motions or effects, which are the consequences thereof; as to *consider, approve, or have regard* to what is said to be known. As what is in the Hebrew, ^c *and God knew them*, is in our translation, *and God had respect unto them*. So the verb to know is frequently used after such manner in our translation^d, who *knoweth* or *layeth* to heart the power of thine anger? ^e Israel doth *not know*, not duly weigh the benefits received of God; as it follows, My people *doth not consider*. ^f There arose up a new king, which *knew not*, had no regard or

° Thus the Arabians expressed themselves; so Abdolmelich their caliph, to one John, With what face wilt thou appear before my Lord, after having deposed me? that is, having attempted it. Ockley's History of the Saracens, vol. ii. p. 329. ^p Jer. xxxviii. 23. ^q 1 Kings xiv. 16. ^r Acts i. 18. ^s Matt. xxvii. 5, &c. ^t Rom. xiv. 15. ^u 1 Cor. vii. 16. ^v Job iii. 3. ^x Mic. ii. 4. ^y Luke xii. 20. ^z Exod. vii. 13. And so the same words are rendered which are in the Hebrew of verse 22. of the same chapter. ^a Hos. xii. 8. ^b John xv. 6. ^c Exod. ii. 25. ^d Psal. xc. 11. ^e Isa. i. 3. ^f Exod. i. 8.

respect for, Joseph. * We beseech you, *to know them* which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, duly to regard, and be conducted by them. ^b The *Lord knoweth*, approveth the way of the righteous. ¹ If any man love God, the same is *known*, or approved and accepted of him ^k. ¹ I say unto you, *I know you not*, I do not own or regard you.

24. *To remember*, often signifies to attend to with affection and desire. On the contrary, *to forget*, is to disregard and contemn: thus, ^m *remember these, O Jacob*, thou shalt not be *forgotten* of me; that is, attend to, and delight in my commandments, and thou shalt not be rejected by me.

25. *Fire and smoke* import the high displeasure and anger of God against sinners; as, ⁿ O Lord God, how long wilt thou *be angry?* Hebrew, how long wilt thou *smoke?* Hence, ^o The Lord will *come with fire*, to render his anger with fury, &c. And ^p the anger of the Lord shall smoke against the man.

26. The *loins*, (wherein is said to consist the strength of the body,) and the *girding the loins*, signifies strength itself; as, ^q there is no more strength, Hebrew, *no more girdle*. Hence, ^r *Thou hast girded me with strength* unto the battle. ^s *Girded with power*. ¹ I will *loose the loins* ⁿ of kings, weaken their strength ^v. And hence also the phrase is used in the spiritual sense, for zeal and perseverance, in promoting the kingdom of God, both in Christ, and the members of his church: thus, ^w *Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins*. ^x *Let your loins be girded about*. ^y *Gird up the loins of your minds*, be always ready for the Lord's coming, by persevering in religious behaviour ^z.

27. The eastern people were accustomed to express themselves by *actions* ^a, as well as words; so it was customary with the Jews, in time of grief and trouble, to rend their

g 1 Thess. v. 12. h Psal. i. 6. i 1 Cor. viii. 3. k And so probably Rom. viii. 29. l Matt. xxv. 12. So also 2 Tim. ii. 19, &c. m Isa. xlv. 21. n Psal. lxxx. 4. o Isa. lxvi. 15, 16. p Deut. xxix. 20. q Isa. xxiii. 10. r 2 Sam. xxii. 40. s Psal. xviii. 39. lxx. 6. t Isa. xlv. 1. u *ισχυον* in the LXX. v Isa. v. 27. Prov. iii. 17. w Isa. xi. 5. x Luke xii. 35. y 1 Pet. i. 13. z Ephes. vi. 14. a Casaubon. Exercit. xvi. anni 34. num. lxxxix. p. 536. ubi addit. Quem morem nos in Commentariis Polybianis multis exemplis illustramus.

garments^b, to pluck off their hair^c, to go barefoot, and cover their faces^d, and to sprinkle ashes or dust on their heads^e, which would be looked upon as certain signs of distraction with us, but was commonly done by the greatest and wisest men of those parts of the world: and therefore the expressions of the penmen of the holy Scripture, which allude to such usages, were suitable to the custom of the places and times wherein they lived; such as, ^f *Rend your heart, and not your garments.* ^g *Cut off thine hair, O Jerusalem, and cast it away, and take up a lamentation.* ^h *Go, and put off thy shoes.* ⁱ *Shame hath covered my face*^k. From what has been said concerning this first rule of interpreting the holy Scripture, *viz.* as it complies with the language and manner of expressions among men, we may not only the better understand it, but also by the way observe, that several cavils which have been made against the style thereof, and against some customs therein mentioned, proceed from ignorance of antiquity, and judging of ancient times and foreign countries by our own; not considering the genius of the eastern people, with whom these forms of speaking and customs, which seem most strange to us, were very usual. (At this day, the putting off the hat, as with us, would seem very odd and ridiculous among the easterns, who never uncover the head, but bow the same in their salutations.) We should read the Scriptures, at least, with that candour and respect, as we do the writings of human authors; and consider the country, the times, and persons, and the occasions upon which they were written.

The second general rule, for interpreting the holy Scriptures, is that of Dr. Lightfoot: “for the interpretation of the phrases, and many histories of the New Testament, it is not so much what we think of them, agreeably to notions derived from certain principles of ours, as in what sense they could be understood by the persons who lived in those times, according to their own usual customs and manner of

^b Ezra ix. 3. ^c Jer. xxxvi. 24. ^d 2 Sam. xix. 4. ^e 2 Sam. xiii. 19. Lam. ii. 10.
^f Joel ii. 13. ^g Jer. vii. 29. ^h Isa. xx. 2. ⁱ Psal. lxxix. 7. ^k So Jer. li. 5.
 See also Acts xxi. 11. and xxii. 23.

speaking^l." The use of this rule appears partly from what hath been last observed; but we shall have more use of it, when we consider the Jewish customs and expressions for the better understanding of divers passages in the New Testament.

The third general rule is, to enquire into the chief design and scope of each book; and, as Bishop Stillingfleet directs^m, especially for the understanding of the New Testament, "to fix in our minds a true state of the controversies of that time, which will give us more light in the knowledge of the Scriptures, than large volumes of commentators, or the best systems of modern controversies." This rule will be of good use for the right understanding of the Epistles.

SECTION X.

Synopsis; or a general view of the history of the Jews, and of the state of the Church, in seven periods.

Period I. WHEN God had made the world, and also formed our first parents, Adam and Eve, he placed them in Paradise; but they soon forfeited life, and God's favour, by the instigation of the old serpent, the Devil: yet, at the same time, it pleased God to promise the Messiah, (or Saviour,) called the Seed of the woman, because, after the nature of man, he was in the fulness of time to proceed from some of her offspring. Those people who kept close to the worship and service of God, were the posterity of Seth; but in process of time they became infected by the ungodly posterity of Cain, insomuch, that at length, such was the wickedness of mankind, as to occasion God to send a flood of water upon the old world, Noah and his family being preserved therein, and the creatures which he carried with him into the ark; somewhat above a thousand six hundred years from the creationⁿ.

Period II. The new world was peopled by Noah's sons, and their posterity, which was the sooner effected by their lan-

^l Lightfoot Hor. in Matt. vi. 9. obs. 3. ^m In his Ecclesiastical Cases, Visitat. 1696, at the end. ⁿ Gen. i. to ix.

guage being divided ; but of all Noah's offspring, God was pleased to make a peculiar covenant with Abraham and his posterity, both in respect to their inheritance in the land of Canaan, and the promise of the Messiah to come from his seed, according to the flesh ; which Messiah, when come, should be their Saviour, and also of all other nations of the earth. Those of Abraham's issue, whom God ordained to be the heirs of the promise, and the members of his church on earth, were his son Isaac, and grandson Jacob, called also Israel, with Jacob's twelve sons and their posterity, who made up the people called the children of Israel. Joseph, one of them, being envied by the rest, (when sojourning together with their father in Canaan,) was sold by them into Egypt ; where at length he became the second man in the kingdom, next to king Pharaoh, which was occasioned by his advising to lay up provision against a seven years' scarcity and famine, which God enabled him to foretel. In the time of the famine he succoured and settled in Egypt his father Jacob, and all his brethren, which came to pass a little more than six hundred years after the floodⁿ.

Period III. After some time a new king arose in Egypt, (called also Pharaoh,) who *knew not Joseph* ; but being both unmindful of what he had done for that nation in the time of the famine, and also being jealous of the increase and strength of the children of Israel, grievously afflicted them for above fourscore years ; but at length God delivered them, by the hands of Moses and Aaron, having wrought many wonderful works ; and at last conducted them through the Red sea, wherein Pharaoh and all his host were destroyed, and brought them into the wilderness or desert of Arabia, on their way towards Canaan, in order to settle them therein, according to his covenant with Abraham their ancestor ; in the mean time supplying them in a miraculous manner with manna, which he gave them from heaven, and with water out of the rock. And when they had journeyed so far in Arabia as to mount Sinai, he instructed them by Moses in his laws, which they

ⁿ Gen. ix. to the end of the book.

should observe when they came to inhabit Canaan : but upon their murmuring and distrust in God's promises, many of them were destroyed, and their entrance into Canaan was delayed for the space of forty years, in which they wandered in the wilderness of Arabia ; but at the end of that space, by God's assistance, and under the conduct of Joshua, they were brought to Canaan, and enabled, in seven years, to conquer the old inhabitants of the land, and possess their country : which was, by God's appointment, divided amongst them into twelve parts, according to the number of Jacob's twelve sons, whose offspring were esteemed as so many tribes, or families, four hundred and seventy-seven years after the covenant made with Abraham their forefather °.

Period IV. After the death of Joshua, and some of their elders, an evil generation succeeded, who, for their idolatry, and other sins, were at sundry times given up by God into the hands of their enemies, some of the old inhabitants of Canaan, especially the Philistines, who were still left in the outparts of the land : but, upon their repentance, as often delivered by the Judges, whom God raised up for that purpose. At length, notwithstanding a long experience of God's immediate protection, and being provoked by the ill management of Samuel's sons, whom he (their last judge, and immediate ruler under God) had in his old age taken for his assistance in the government, they desired a king to be set over them, like the kings of other nations. Accordingly God, by his providence, caused first Saul, then David, to be anointed their king. After David, his son Solomon succeeded, in whose reign the first temple was built, and their state and glory was at the highest, four hundred and forty-seven years after their entrance into Canaan †.

Period V. After Solomon's death, Rehoboam, his son, being anointed their king, and giving a harsh answer to the people, addressing him for the removal of some grievances, alienated the hearts of ten of the twelve tribes ; so that they chose

° Exod. i. &c. and Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, to the end of Joshua.

† Judges ii. to 1 Kings xii.

Jeroboam to be king over them, and forsook the house of David. Upon which the kingdom was divided between that of Rehoboam and his successors, kings over the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and who were of the house of David, (whose chief seat was at Jerusalem,) and that of Jeroboam, and his successors, kings over the other ten tribes of Israel, (whose chief seat was at Samaria.) The former was called *the kingdom of Judah*, the latter *the kingdom of Israel*. This division lasted, till at length (by reason of their idolatry and other impieties, notwithstanding the constant admonition of the prophets, whom God sent among them from time to time) the ten tribes of the kingdom of Israel were carried away captive into Assyria; and somewhat above an hundred years after that, the other two tribes of Judah and Benjamin were likewise carried captive into Babylon, the city of Jerusalem, and the temple therein being destroyed, four hundred and sixteen years after their highest state, and the finishing of Solomon's temple, and eight hundred and sixty-three years after their entrance into Canaan⁹.

Period VI. The great body of the ten tribes, or those of the kingdom of Israel, who were carried into Assyria, never returned; but the chief part of their country was possessed by those whom the Assyrian kings had sent thither, called Samaritans, from Samaria, the chief city of the country: but the tribe of Judah, with that of Benjamin, (which made up the kingdom of Judah, from thence afterwards called Jews,) according to God's promise, and by his wonderful providence, were permitted by the Persian kings, who had conquered the Babylonians, to return into their own land, and to rebuild their city Jerusalem, and the temple, (which is from thence called the *second temple*,) and to settle themselves again in Canaan, after seventy years' captivity[†]. [Here the history of the Old Testament ends.]

Period VII. The Jews, after returning into their own country, had various changes in their government, which was managed by the high priest and great council; but in

⁹ 1 Kings xii. to 2 Kings xxv. 22.

[†] Ezra i. to the end of Esther.

subjection, first to the Persians, then to Alexander the Great, (the Grecian or Maccdonian king,) and next to the kings of Egypt and Syria; by one of whom, *viz.* Antiochus Epiphanes, they were grievously oppressed; but delivered by some among themselves, called Maccabees, till at length they became subject to the Romans; and now, the fulness of time being come, the promised Seed, the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, appeared in the world: he was born of the Virgin Mary, (one of Abraham's posterity, as God promised him,) and suffered under Pontius Pilate, then deputy-governor of Judæa, and was crucified, but rose again the third day, and ascended triumphantly into heaven. He was first manifested to the Jews, and then, according to the tenor of the covenant with Abraham, to the other nations of the earth, called Gentiles: this Gospel being made known up and down the world by the Apostles, and other first publishers thereof, God bearing them witness, and assisting them with the miraculous gifts and power of his holy Spirit, against all opposition, either of Jews or Gentiles. The Romans, being the last masters of the Jews, at length were the instruments, in God's hands, of destroying their city Jerusalem, and their second temple, and of putting an end to their state and nation, fulfilling upon them all that the prophets and our Lord Jesus Christ had foretold; which came to pass about thirty-seven years after his passion, six hundred and two years after their return from the Babylonian captivity, and about one thousand five hundred years after their first settlement in Canaan.

CHAPTER II.

General remarks for the better understanding of the Pentateuch.

THE first part of the Bible is called, from the Greek language, the *Pentateuch*, that is, a five-fold volume, because it consists of five books; as, 1. Genesis, which signifies the original, or first beginning, as giving an account of the original or creation of the world, and all that is therein; of the renewing of mankind and other creatures after the flood; and of the birth and genealogy of the ancient Patriarchs, &c.

2. Exodus, which signifies going out or departing, because it chiefly describes the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt. 3. Leviticus, which treats of the sacrifices and the offices of the priests, who were to be of the posterity of Levi. 4. Numbers, which begins with an account of the numbering of the people of Israel, and contains the most notable things which they did or suffered during their wandering in the wilderness. 5. Deuteronomy, which signifies a second law, because it contains a repetition of certain laws, with divers motives and exhortations to observe them.

In the Epistle to the Reader, some general remarks are said to be prefixed to the several parts of the Bible, the better to prepare him for the understanding of them. Those for the Pentateuch are as follow :

First, As for what we read concerning the extraordinary age of men, and the stature and size of their bodies, Josephus gives some reasons ^a for the vast difference between the term of man's life before the flood, which was lengthened out to so many hundred years, and what it was afterwards, and what we find it now reduced to: as, “*first*, That it pleased God to bestow the blessings of so long a life, because men, in the infancy of the world, lived more in obedience to their Maker, or were dear ^b to God. *Secondly*, That their more proper food ^c did very much conduce to this end. And, *lastly*, that Providence found it necessary for the study and advancement of virtue and religion, by so many living and experienced instructors, and for the improvement of sciences, and the making and perfecting of observations.” To which we may add, that the world might be the sooner peopled in the beginning thereof, and likewise after the flood: but when some ages expired, and the world became more full of people, the common age of man was lessened to seventy or eighty years; which is manifestly an appointment of the same Lord who ruleth the world; for by this means the peopled world is kept at a convenient stay, neither too full nor too empty; for if the generality of men were to live now to Abraham's age, of

^a Antiquities, book i. chap. iv. (Gr. 3.) near the end.

^b Θεοφιλις ἀντις.

^c Τροφας ἐπιτηδισιασικας.

an hundred and seventy-five years, the world would be too much over-run, (whence would ensue famines and destructive wars;) or if only to twenty or thirty years, then the decays of mankind would be too fast. It hath been further observed, that since Adam was to have continued alive if he had not sinned, God gave him such a temperature of constitution of body, which, if rightly ordered by him, would have continued his life; but on his rebelling and indulging his bodily appetites, that temperature became subject to decay. However, both himself and others of that age lived long, because they being not so far distant in time, their constitution was not so much worn as those were, who in after-ages lived farthest off from the first establishment of the human constitution^d.

Further, as we read of a great difference in the age, so we do of the stature and size of some men, before and after the flood: as, ^e *there were giants in the earth in those days.* And, ^f *there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers.* And, ^g *the height of Goliath was six cubits and a span,* which hath been computed to be somewhat above eleven feet English: but those giants are spoken of as rarities and wonders of the age, not of the common stature; and such instances we have had in all ages, as of Maximinus the emperor, who was nine feet high, as were others in the reign of Augustus^h. But for the ordinary size of mankind, in all probability it was always the same; as may appear from the monuments, and mummies, and other ancient evidences to be seen at this dayⁱ; and also from the cells or stone coffins in the Egyptian pyramids, which do hardly exceed our common coffins^k.

^d Pocock's Not. Miscel. ad Maim. Porta Mosis, cap. vi. p. 200. ^e Gen. vi. 4.
^f Numb. xiii. 33. ^g 1 Sam. xvii. 4. ^h Dr. Hakewill's Apol. apud Derham, Physico-Theol. book v. chap. 4. ⁱ Derham, ibid. And therefore those betray their ignorance and folly, who charge the Scriptures with fabulous narrations of giants, which are not mentioned as being of the common, but extraordinary stature, as have been in other ages. ^k Mr. Greaves carefully measured the monument of Cheops, or Chemnis, king of Egypt, in the first and largest pyramid, and found the hollow part within to be in length, on the west side, but six feet and and somewhat over. Ray's Collect. of Travels, tom. ii. chap. iii. p. 118.

2. The food which God was pleased to assign mankind before the flood seems to have been only herbs and fruits, which perhaps were then more nourishing and healthful. They did indeed keep and feed cattle^m, but that they might do for the skin and wool, and for sacrifices. After the flood they had a grant of living creatures to feed upon, as well as *the green herb*ⁿ.

3. The manner of living of the ancient Patriarchs, before and after the flood, was generally not in cities or houses, but frequently in tabernacles or tents^o only, like our booths, which were set up for a present turn, and might be removed as they changed their abode. Thus before the flood, Jabal is said to be *the father of them that dwell in tents*^p: and after the flood, Noah *was uncovered in his tent*^q; and Abraham *removed and pitched his tent*^r; the men and women having distinct tents apart by themselves^s. Their flocks and herds of cattle were very numerous; and in these consisted their wealth and substance^t. They had also very many servants to attend on their cattle^u. Thus Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lived among the Canaanites as strangers^v, without cities or houses, only in tents, and had pasturage for their cattle, partly by the consent of the Canaanites, who were the inhabitants^w, and partly by God's striking a terror on the cities near which they were, that they should not hurt them^x.

Further, under this head, we may take notice of the frugality and plainness of the greatest persons in those early times, who employed themselves in the most vulgar honest services: thus Abraham, although esteemed *a mighty prince*^y, yet ordered Sarah his wife to *make ready three measures of fine meal, to knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth*, whilst himself *ran unto the herd and fetched a calf tender and good*^z. And *he took butter*^a *and milk, and the calf which he had*

^l Gen. i. 29. and iii. 17. ^m Gen. iv. 2. ⁿ Gen. ix. 3. ^o See the Appendix, No. 1. ^p Gen. iv. 20. ^q Gen. ix. 21. ^r Gen. xii. 8. ^s Gen. xxiv. 67. and xxxi. 33. ^t As it is also mentioned concerning Job, chap. i. 3. and xlii. 12. ^u Gen. xxxvi. 14. and xiv. 14. ^v Acts vii. 5. ^w Gen. xiv. 13. and xx. 15. ^x Gen. xxxv. 5. ^y Gen. xxiii. 6. ^z Gen. xviii. 6, 7. ^a Verse 8. Among the dainties of the Arabians, is mentioned a leg or shoulder of a suck-

dressed, and set it before them. And Rebecca, who was to be married to Isaac, his son and heir, went *with a pitcher upon her shoulder for water*^c. And Rachel, to whom Isaac's son Jacob was afterwards married, *kept her father's sheep*^d. One thing more to be remarked concerning the ancient Patriarchs is, that they were most of them prophets, or endued with the Holy Spirit in an extraordinary manner, and had the privilege of consulting God on proper occasions, and were divinely assisted in conducting themselves and families, as appears particularly in the affairs related of Noah; Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob^e.

As for the blessings, mentioned in some of the last cited passages, which the Patriarchs conferred on their children, it is plain they were supernaturally directed in so doing; so that the patriarchal benedictions were truly prophetic^f. Hence Isaac declared confidently of Jacob, *Yea, and he shall be blessed*^g. However, since God chose the fathers of children to pronounce them blessed in his name, their doing so was in fact a method of God's grace and providence; so that, by way of example from thence, it is very proper for parents and spiritual guides solemnly to bless, that is, to pray for a blessing on their children and people, as having a special relation to God and them, and that with an expectancy of such blessings being ratified and confirmed in heaven: thus David, as a father of his family, *returned to bless his household*^h; and Aaron *was separated by God to bless in his name*ⁱ.

4. We have but little account of the government and religious exercise of mankind, from the beginning of the creation to the flood, and also after the flood to the time of Moses.

As to their government: in the first place, civil government appears to be a divine ordinance, not only from Scripture, but

ling lamb, roasted and covered over with butter and milk. Ockley's Hist. of the Saracens, vol. ii. p. 330. ^c Gen. xxiv. 15, &c. ^d Gen. xxix 9. ^e As of Noah, Gen. vi. 8, 13. and chap. ix. Of Abraham, Gen. xii. 1, 2. and chap. xx. 7. (where Abraham is expressly called a prophet.) Of Isaac, Gen. xxvi. 2. and chap. xxvii. and xxviii. Of Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 10, &c. and chap. xxxv. and chap. xlvi. 19. ^f As may be seen particularly in Gen. xxvii, xxviii, xlvi, and xlix. ^g Gen. xxvii. 33. ^h 2 Sam. vi. 20. ⁱ 1 Chron. xxiii. 13.

because it is founded in the natural order and reason of things, of consequence to the multiplication of mankind, and so becomes necessary to their common peace and happiness^k: or, in other words, civil government tends to the preservation and common good of mankind, as created by God, and placed by him in this world; and therefore it does also tend to the end and design of God in our creation, and so is both naturally good and necessary for us, since without it, when mankind became multiplied in the earth, they could not be preserved in safety, or in the enjoyment of what God had provided for them. This government seems to have been wholly at first in the hands of the fathers or masters of the several families, which also generally descended to the first-born: thus, in the history of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, they exercised the chief power and command over their families, children, and servants, and ordered all things, without being answerable or accountable to any other. Afterwards, on the increase and multiplying of families, common interest necessarily occasioned a subjection to governors of a more extensive authority. The manner how the Israelites were governed under Moses, and afterwards when they took possession of Canaan, is set down in the account given of the book of Joshua.

As for religion, no doubt but they had some traditions, which at first were given by God to Adam. The Jews frequently mention 'seven precepts enjoined the sons of Noah; and they affirm that six of them were given to Adam and his children, and the seventh to Noah. The *first*, to renounce all idols, and all idolatrous worship^m. The *second*, to worship the true God, the Creator of heaven and earthⁿ. The *third*, to avoid bloodshed, or to commit no murder. The *fourth*, not to be defiled with fornication, adultery, or any incestuous mixtures^o. The *fifth*, to avoid injustice and theft^p. The *sixth*, to administer justice, and preserve the order of civil

^k Legatur Grotius de Jure Belli et Pacis, lib. i. c. 4. §. 7. num. 3. ^l Talmud et R. R. apud Mede, Disc. iii. and Dr. Cave's Apparatus to the Lives of the Apostles, §. i. num. 3. ^m Compare Job xxxi. 36, &c. ⁿ Job i. 5. ^o Job xxxi. 9, &c. ^p Job xxiv, 2, &c.

societies^q. The *seventh*, to abstain from eating flesh with the blood therein.

However this was, what we certainly know is, that they prayed, and also offered sacrifices to God, as a tribute of thankfulness to the Author of their good, and to obtain his favour and help, and that most likely by his own appointment; for since his acceptance and pardon was a matter of pure grace and favour, whatsoever could be a means to signify and convey that, must, one would think, be appointed by himself. Cain offered some *of the fruit of the ground*, and Abel *the firstlings of his flock*^r. And *Noah built an altar*, and offered beasts and fowls^s; and it is added, *'the Lord smelled a sweet savour*. So Abraham and Isaac *built an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord*^u. So Jacob built an altar to the Lord by God's own appointment^v; and we have a form of prayer of his^w. God might appoint the sacrificing of beasts, that by this practice the minds of men should be the more easily disposed to own and rely upon that great sacrifice, which Christ was one day to make of himself for them.

The person that executed the office of a priest was ordinarily the head of the family, as appears from the places last cited, namely, those who, according to the order of nature, excelled the rest, and was to them the supreme governor next to God himself; although, from the very beginning, it seems every particular person was his own priest, when the sacrifice was offered for himself alone, (as Cain and Abel were.) When the offering was for a family, the master of it was the priest, (as Noah and Job.) When for several families, or a society, the chief thereof executed the priestly office, (as Moses^x, and Melchisedeck;) and possibly the priests^y, when Aaron and his sons were not as yet consecrated, were the chief persons in the several tribes^z. And thus it continued, till God was pleased to settle the office in the tribe of Levi

^q Job xxxi. 11. ^r Gen. iv. ^s Gen. viii. 20. ^t Verse 21. ^u Gen. xii. 7. and xxvi. 21. ^v Gen. xxxv. 1, &c. ^w Gen. xxxii. 9, &c. ^x Exod. xxiv. 6. ^y Exod. xix. 22. ^z As for the first-born, see Bishop Patrick in Exod. xix. 22.

among the Jews, of which afterwards. In the mean time, we are to remember what has been above mentioned, that those priests were prophets, and extraordinarily directed by God; so that they did not assume the office to themselves.

It may not be improper to insert here, what the learned Bishop Wilkins hath observed concerning the ancient sacrifices, before and under the law^a. “As for the chief matter and substance of natural worship, (says he,) unto which the light of reason will direct, I know no other than the invoking of the Deity, returning thanks to him, and enquiring after his will. It is true, indeed, that all nations, pretending to any religion, from the most ancient times, to which any record doth extend, have agreed in the way of worship by sacrifice; and from this general practice, there may seem to be some ground to infer this way of worship to have been directed by the light of nature: but when it is well considered, what little ground there is to persuade a man, left to his own free reason, that God should be pleased with the burning and killing of beasts, or with the destroying of such things by fire, of which better use might be made, if they were disposed of some other way: I say, when it is well considered, what little reason there is to induce such a man to believe that the burning or killing of beasts or birds, or any other thing useful to mankind, should of itself be a proper and natural means to testify our subjection to God, or to be used by way of expiation for sin, it will rather appear probable that the original of this practice was from institution^b. So that our first parents were by particular revelations instructed in this way of worship; from whom it was delivered down to their successive generations by verbal tradition; and by this means was continued in those families who departed from the church, and proved heathen, in the first ages of the world; amongst whom this tradition was, in course of time, for want of care and frequent renewals, cor-

^a Bishop Wilkins of Natural Religion, book i. chap. 12. and Bishop Patrick on Gen. iv. 3. ^b Though not recorded, as many other things are omitted by Moses in so short a history; and that the very sort of creatures to be sacrificed were appointed, and therefore called *clean*, and as such offered by Noah, Gen. viii. 20. and what were not such were called *unclean*.

rupted, with many human superinducements, according to the genius or interests of several times or nations; yet still they retained so much of it, that they had universally the notion of purging sins by the blood of others suffering in their stead.

“As for the reasons why God was pleased to institute to his own people this way of worship, there are these two things which may be suggested. *First*, Sacrifices had a typical reference unto their great design, which was to be accomplished in the fulness of time by the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross, which is at large explained and applied in several parts of the New Testament, particularly in the Epistle to the Hebrews. *Secondly*, This way of worship was most suitable to those ages, the providence of God having purposely adapted his own institutions of worship unto the abilities and capacities of men, in several times discovering himself to his people *in divers manners*, according to *sundry times*^c. And therefore in those first and ruder ages of the world, when people were more generally immersed in sensible things, and stood in need of somewhat to raise and fix their imaginations, God was pleased to amuse them with external pomp and solemnities, and to employ that time of their nonage about these plainer rudiments or elements of the world; but when they were grown up from their nonage, and the minds of men were rendered more rational and inquisitive than before they had been, and consequently better prepared for the reception of the Christian religion, in *the fulness of time*, as the Scripture styles it, did the providence of God think fit to introduce the Christian religion, and a more solid, rational, and spiritual way of worship, whose precepts are most agreeable to the purest and sublimest reason, consisting chiefly in a regulation of the mind and spirit, and such kind of practices as may promote the good of human society, and most effectually conduce to the perfecting of their natures, and rendering of them happy.”

5. God was pleased to appear or manifest himself unto Adam^d and the ancient Patriarchs in a visible glorious

^c Heb. i. 1.

^d Gen. iii. 8.

manner^e, which the Jews call the *shechinah*, or *shecinah*, that is, *in-dwelling*, from *shacan*, a word which signifies *to dwell*, because it was a token of God's special presence, and by it he, as it were, *dwelt* among his people^f. It seems to have been a very shining flame, or amazing splendour of light, breaking out of a thick cloud, of which we afterwards read very often, under the name of *the glory of the Lord*, not as being itself a divine thing, or ray of divinity, but a symbol or sign of God's glorious presence, which might be that *burning lamp* which appeared when God renewed the covenant with Abraham^g; and that which appeared to Moses as a *flame of fire*, or in a flaming manner, like fire, out of the midst of a bush, from whence God spake to him^h. In such manner it is believed that God appeared to Adam and others, and conversed with them. Hence, whereas it is said, that ⁱ *God went up from Abraham*, the Chaldee paraphrase says, *the brightness or lustre of God ascended*; and after this manner the following places are interpreted; ^k *the Lord appeared to Abraham*; and ^l *Abraham stood before the Lord*: and ^m *the Lord went his way*, the divine majesty or the glory of the Lord disappeared. This *shechinah* or glory appeared afterwards in the tabernacle and temple, of which more when we come to treat of them. And there cannot be so fit an emblem of God as light. This appearance is called, ⁿ *the glory of the Lord*; and *the sight of the glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire*.

The *angels* were^o attendants upon, and made a part of, the *shechinah*, or glorious appearance of the divine Majesty. Thus, ^p *the angel of the Lord appeared unto Moses in a flame of fire*; and ^q *the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them*; it follows, *and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them*: so that the angel was with the *shechinah*, or

^e Archbishop Tenison of Idolatry, chap. 14. Bishop Patrick on Gen. ii. 15, 16.

^f Exod. xxix. 46. ^g Gen. xv. 17. ^h Exod. iii. 2, 4. ⁱ Gen. xvii. 22.

^k Gen. xvii. 1. and xviii. 1. ^l Gen. xviii. 22. ^m Verse 33. ⁿ Exod. xxiv. 16, 17.

^o Tenison, *ibid.* and Mede, book ii. of the Reverence of God's House, §. 2.

^p Exod. iii. 2. ^q Chap. xiv. 19.

appearance of the fire and cloud^r. And many things, which God is said to have done, were doubtless effected by their ministry. Note here, that although we often read of the glory of the Lord appearing to his people, as has been said, yet when he manifested himself to the children of Israel, to give them his law, they *saw no similitude*, that is, no figure of a man, or of any other creature or thing which could be the object of their worship^s, that he might take off all occasion of idolatry.

Further, as by the *shechinah*, or glory and light, God was pleased to appear, or manifest himself to the people of the first ages, so doubtless there was some place where the divine Majesty used to appear, which was the settled place of worship where Cain and Abel offered their sacrifices: and of Rebecca it is said, that she *went to enquire of the Lord*^t. Most likely she went to some particular place for that purpose; and it is very probable there was some divinely inspired person attending that *shechinah*, such as Melchisedeck was at Salem^u.

6. In the Old Testament God revealed himself under two different notions; viz. *first*, in general, as Creator and Governor of the world, and so he is called *Elshaddai*, the Almighty, and *Elohim*, the Mighty Judge, &c. *Secondly*, in particular, and specially, as in covenant with his church, who were then the Israelites, (the posterity of Abraham,) and the worshippers of the true God, in opposition to the idolatrous heathen. In this sense he is styled *Jehovah*^v, which signifies strictly his absolute existence, who *was, and is, and is to come*^w. In Exodus^x it is, *I am that I am*, which is of the same derivation in the original, and signifies^y, he that necessarily exists, or must needs be, who is independent, and always the same. For the most part, where Jehovah is not expressly set down in our translation, and yet is in the original Hebrew, we read for it *the Lord*; that is, *first*, the true God, in opposition to the idol gods; and, *secondly*, the God

^r See also Deut. xxxiii. 2. Psal. lxxviii. 7, 17. civ. 4. ^s Deut. iv. 12, 15.

^t Gen. xxv. 22. ^u Ainsworth and Patrick on Gen. xxv. 2. ^v *Havah*, he was;

Hoveh, he is; *Jeheveh*, he is to come. ^w Rev. i. 4. ^x Exod. iii. 14.

^y *Ehejeh*, I am, or will be.

of Israel, or who entered into covenant with that people, This Jehovah is opposed to the idol god Baal. ^z *If the Lord* (in the Hebrew, *Jehovah*) *be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him*: and ^a Elijah says, *I only remain a prophet of the Lord, (Jehovah,) but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty*^b.

This name Jehovah seems to have been known to Abraham. ^c *And Abraham called the name of the place Jehovah Jireh*, that is, Jehovah will see or provide; and God says to him, ^d *I am (Jehovah, so it is in the original, but we read) the Lord, who brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it*. God indeed afterwards said to Moses, when he was about to deliver the children of Israel from their slavery in Egypt, in order to the accomplishment of his promise, in settling them in Canaan, ^e *I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of (Elishaddai, which signifies) God Almighty*^f, (thereby teaching them that he was able to perform;) *but by my name Jehovah was I not known unto them*; which may be read, as some interpret, by way of question, *was I not known unto them by my name Jehovah?* And indeed their dependence on God's promises was fixed as well on his unchangeableness as his power: however, he doth not here say, *My name Jehovah was not known to them*, but, *I was not known to them by this name*, or, as it is also read, *I manifested not to them this name*^g, that is, as some understand, by what that name imports, as signifying a being always the same, viz. an experimental and personal sense of the fulfilling his promises, according to the covenant he made with them, actually to give them the possession of Canaan; for they were sustained by faith, without receiving the thing promised^h.

7. Concerning the idolatry of the heathen world, we may remark, in the first place, that we have no mention of it before the flood: the creation of the world was then more fresh in men's

^z 1 Kings xviii. 21. ^a Versè 22. ^b Concerning the notion which the Jews have of this name, and their superstition in not pronouncing it, see Buxtorf. in Havah, and Gerhard's Loc. com. exegesis de natura Dei, §. 22. ^c Gen. xxii. 14. ^d Gen. xv. 7. ^e Exod. vi. 3. ^f Gen. xvii. 1. ^g As Ainsworth observes the Greek and Chaldee translate it. ^h Acts vii. 5.

minds, by reason of the great age of many of them, and the purity of religion was preserved by those who were the servants of the true God, the Maker of heaven and earth. *Secondly*, That although the religious worship of the vulgar people rose little higher than the objects of sense, as images, however, than the worship of demons or spirits, (they easily apprehending that being as the supreme God, to which they saw the worship of the supreme God was paid;) yet the more judicious believed "one true God, as a Being of himself, and as the principal Author and Parent of all things, the one supreme uncompounded Good^k."

Nevertheless, the Pagan world were generally guilty of idolatry; of which the most ancient seems to be the worship of the sun, and the rest of the^l heavenly bodies, (though not as the supreme God, yet) as the supreme visible deities, through an admiration of their splendour, and also a vain fancy that some intelligent being or divinity, as mediators between God and man, did inhabit those illustrious bodies; (and thus they might the rather believe, because they found them so beneficial, as the sun more especially is, by light, and heat, and fruitfulness unto mankind.) Hence we read, that Job vindicated himself from such idolatry^m; *If I beheld the sun when it shined, and the moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed*, (that is, with the inward devotion of soul,) *or my mouth hath kissed my hand*, which was an outward ceremony expressing adoration and worship; and therefore he adds, in the next verse, *I should have denied the God that is above*. Hence also the sun was called by the Chaldeans, *Baal*, which signifies lord and master, and by the Ammonites, *Molech*, or *Moloch*, that is, a prince or king; and the moon was termed *Ashtaroth*, or the queen of heaven; whence the caution is given the Israelites, "*Lest thou lift up thine eyes to heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them*. And because the

^k Archbishop Tenison of Idolatry, chap. v. part 3, 4. and vid. Appendix, num. 20.

^l Bishop Stillingfleet's Defence of his Discourse of Idolatry, part i. chap. i. §. 12, 13. Maimon. Mor. Nevoch. pars iii. cap. 25. ^m Job xxxi. 26, 27. ⁿ Deut. iv. 19.

idolaters thought those planets at too great a distance, and often found them to be out of sight, (seeing the mind, being united to a gross body, receiveth instruction through the outward senses,) they would have more constant and visible mediators: for which purpose they made them images or idols, not only as symbols and representations of that Being, to which they gave divine worship; but also supposing that some deities were present with, and did reside in and influence the images dedicated to them, as they believed they did the ° planets: of which sort might be Laban's images or teraphims^p.

The account given by a late ^q learned author of the ancient idolaters in Arabia, called Zabei, from their own writers, further illustrates these notions of the pagan idolaters, *viz.* That because men want mediators between the supreme God and them, some pure spiritual beings or intelligences perform the office; and that these inhabit the Sacelli, or bodies of the planets, which are therefore the objects of their worship: and because the planets are often not seen, and so they should want visible mediators, others of them came to form images that were appropriated to each planet, which served instead of the planets themselves, to procure for them the mediation of the spiritual beings residing in the planets: and, *lastly*, that both the planets and the images of them above mentioned were called *lords* and *gods*, and worshipped with proper offerings and prayers.

The same author has given us a further account of another original and kind of ^r idolatry among some of the ancient Persians and Indians; which though it serve not so much to illustrate the holy Scripture, may be here briefly mentioned. They owned an eternal supreme god, that is, *Light*, as the author of all beings, whom they called *Yazdan*; and that there was also a created god, or the devil, *viz.* *Darkness*, whom they termed *Abraman*; and to testify their respect or honour for their god *Light*, they built temples, and wor-

° Tenison of Idolatry, chap. v. part 8. P Gen. xxxi. 19. ¶ Dr. Pocock's Specimen Hist. Arabum, p. 139, &c. edit. Oxon. 1650. † Pocock. Specim. Hist. Arab. p. 139, &c.

shipped *Fire*: and further, that this sect of people among the Persians were called *Magi*, which in the Arabic and Persian languages signifies *the worshippers of fire* ^s.

The notion above mentioned, which the Pagans had of their images, is also confirmed by those who lived in South America, who declared they knew their idol was only a piece of wood, and of itself could not speak or help them; but they verily believed that God was in the piece of wood, and therefore it deserved their offering and adoration.

The ancient idolaters, especially the Chaldeans, Egyptians, Moabites, and Ammonites, had a cruel way of worshipping Baal, or Molech, (that is, the sun, or, as others, the planet Saturn,) which it seems the Israelites, living near them, were in danger of being infected with, (nay, did actually practise in succeeding ages ⁿ;) and that was, to offer one of their children to be burnt in the image, being made of brass ^v, as a means to procure a blessing and safety for the rest of the family. Others did not practise that inhumanity, only they had their children carried through or between the fires, by way of purification, and dedicating them to the service of Molech. Both these methods are mentioned in Leviticus; the first, of any man's *giving his seed unto Molech*, to be sacrificed and burnt ^w; the other of *letting any of their seed pass through the fire to Molech* ^y. They did also offer unto Baal other sacrifices and burnt-offerings ^z.

The reason which induced the heathen idolaters to proceed from the sacrificing of beasts to that of men ^a, seems to be grounded upon the proportion and equality which, they thought, ought to be observed between the sacrifice, and the person to be thereby reconciled to God: which person, being one of mankind, they judged ought to be atoned for by a sacrifice of mankind. Again, because Baal was a title of highest

^s Pocock, *ibid.* p. 146, &c. ^t Gage's Survey of the West Indies, chap. xx. p. 398. edit. 1677. ^u Jer. xix. 5. 2 Kings xvii. 17. ^v Deut. xii. 31. 2 Chron. xxviii. 3. Psal. cvi. 37, 38. Isa. lvii. 5. Jer. vii. 31. ^w Leviticus xx. 3. and see Jer. vii. 31. ^x Grot. in Deut. xviii. 10. Ainsworth in Levit. xviii. 21. Maimon. Mor. Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 37. ^y Levit. xviii. 21. ^z 2 Kings x. 25.
^a Grot. de Veritate, lib. ii. §. 12.

renown, it came to pass, that great men likewise, when deified after their death, obtained that name.

Here we may farther take notice, that the idolaters esteemed their eating and drinking of a part of what was offered in sacrifice to their idol god to be a federal or covenanting feast, in token of reconciliation with him: for what was once offered to their god, was his, out of which he entertained his worshippers: therefore eating of the sacrifice was a profession of being a worshipper of that god, to whom the sacrifice was offered.

Farthermore, the eastern idolaters were wont to plant groves about their altars, which made the place shady and delightful in those hot countries^b, and also dark and solemn, whereby those that went into them were struck with a kind of horror and awful reverence. The shades also rendered the place fitter for the impure and lewd practices of the idolaters^c. Hence the Israelites were forbidden to plant a grove near God's altar^d; and when Hezekiah destroyed idolatry in Judah, he *brake the images, and cut down the groves*^e, &c. Abraham indeed, before the law, *planted a grove in Beersheba, and called on the name of the Lord*^f. But because the Gentile world so profaned their groves by idols and sacrifices to demons, therefore God forbad them; as he did the mountains and high places for the same reason^g, (though before they had been approved of^h;) the Gentiles having chosen the tops of mountains for the places of their idol temples and sacrifices, as being so much nearer to their heavenly gods, in order to be the sooner heard and observed by themⁱ.

8. Although polygamy, that is, the having more wives than one at a time, came by degrees to be practised, yet from the beginning it was not so, since God gave but one woman to one man, and ordained that they two should be *one*

^b Hos. iv. 13. ^c Exod. xxxiv. 13. Deut. xii. 3. Judges vi. 25. 1 Kings xv. 13. Isa. i. 29. and xvii. 8. Hos. iv. 13, 14. See Spencer de Legibus Hebr. lib. ii. cap. 16. ^d Deut. xvi. 21. ^e 1 Kings xviii. 4. ^f Gen. xxi. 33. ^g Levit. xxvi. 30. ^h Gen. xii. 8. xxii. 2. ⁱ Spencer de Legibus, lib. iii. cap. ii. §. 2.

flesh^k, that is, individually one, or so as that the man should have no like commerce with any other woman whatsoever, either as a concubine, or secondary wife. This appears to be the sense of the place, by what is here mentioned as the ground of that union between Adam and Eve, who being made of his rib, was a part of himself. ^l *This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man.* Then follows, *Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.* And although the wife is not now formed out of her husband's side, and so they are not so literally *one flesh*, as Adam and Eve were, yet from hence both husband and wife ought to esteem themselves made so much one flesh by marriage, as not to separate from each other during life, any more than Adam and Eve could be said to be separate whilst she continued to be a part of him.

Which argument our Saviour makes use of against divorces, as being contrary to the divine institution, except in the case of fornication or adultery, which dissolves the bond of marriage, and makes two to be no longer one flesh^m. Again, the husband, *not having power over his own body, but the wife*, he cannot give it to anotherⁿ, and consequently cannot marry another wife in the lifetime of the former wife.

God indeed was pleased to permit the Jews more wives than one^o, (their concubines also being as secondary wives^p;) and to dispense with his own primitive institution in that imperfect state, and, as it may be supposed, for the multiplying of that people, (which permission they might at first understand by the prophetic spirit with which many of them were endued: afterwards, example and common practice prevailed both amongst the Hebrews and other nations;) yet now under the Gospel, (which teaches a religion of the most spiritual nature, and disallows all intemperate excesses,) polygamy is plainly declared to be unlawful: for if he that *putteth away his wife*, (for any other cause but fornication or

^k Gen. ii. 24.^l Verse 23, 24.^m Matt. xix. 5, 6, &c. 1 Cor. vi. 16.ⁿ 1 Cor. vii. 4.^o Deut. xxi. 15. and 2 Sam. xii. 8.^p Judges viii. 30. See

Ainsworth on Gen. xxii. 24.

adultery,) and *marrieth another, committeth adultery*^q, it follows, that he who having not put her away, marrieth another, must be guilty of the same crime, seeing that if he hath no power to marry another when he hath put away the first wife, (because, notwithstanding the divorce, the first marriage cannot be annulled, but holds good,) he cannot have any whilst he keeps her, and so has no pretence that the marriage is dissolved; for the commission of adultery, mentioned by Christ^r, does not so much consist in the putting away the former wife, as in taking another, or having two at the same time; and whereas it is added^s, *committeth adultery against her*, that does not lessen the husband's crime, but supposes that, and an additional injury to the wife besides, in violating her bed, by taking another into it.

It does also appear, that the Christian religion, prohibiting polygamy, is more agreeable to the law of nature than Mahometism, and others that allow it; because God doth not send into the world more women than men, to supply a multiplicity of wives for one man; nay, it hath been observed from the bills of births, that in proportion there are generally born^t 14 males to 13 females^u; which inequality shews, not only that one man ought to have but one wife, but also that every woman may, without polygamy, have an husband, if she doth not bar herself by the want of virtue, or by denial, and so forth. And farthermore, though lewd persons may the more gratify their intemperate lusts and wandering passions, where polygamy is allowed, yet there wants the fondness and tender affection as is or might be in a marriage between one husband and one wife; the love of such who have many being divided, is dissolved and lost, like water separated by many streams. *Lastly*, Among the Turks, who have as many wives as they can maintain, not exceeding four^x, there are for the most part two grand inconveniences; the first, that the female sex (one half of mankind) are in perfect slavery to their husbands^y, shut up in their houses as in a

^q Matt. xix. 9. ^r Matt. xix. ^s Mark x. 11. ^t Mr. Derham's Physico-Theol. book iv. chap. x. p. 176. ^u Ibid. ^x Smith. Epist. secunda de moribus Turcarum, p. 48. ^y Idem, ibid. p. 49.

prison, and turned off at pleasure, which could never be the intention of the Creator. The next, That from the unequal partiality of the husband towards one or another of his wives, must arise jealousies, impatience, and contests among themselves"; and also on occasion of their several children's interests and satisfaction, there can be little or no peace or content in their families; all which serve to recommend the Christian institution of marriage. The pretence of a former wife's consent excuses not the adultery in taking another, because a consent ought to be in matters just and lawful, that is, conformable to the law of God; but polygamy is contrary thereto, especially under the Gospel.

9. It was anciently customary in many countries, and particularly in the east, for men to purchase wives, instead of having portions with them, by giving so much as was contracted for to their parents or friends for them. Thus Shechem the Hivite desired to contract with Jacob for his daughter Dinah: *Ask me never so much dowry, and I will give according as ye shall say unto me; but give me the damsel to wife*^x. Hence Jacob, having no money or goods, proffers to serve seven years for Rachel^y.

10. Solemn covenants were anciently confirmed by eating and drinking together, and chiefly feasting on a sacrifice. Thus Abimelech, the Philistine, confirmed the covenant with Isaac, by making a feast^z; and Jacob with his father-in-law Laban, by feasting upon a sacrifice^a. Sometimes the custom was to divide the parts of the beast sacrificed, and to confirm the covenant by passing between them; by which the persons would express their resolution of making good the terms of the covenant, on the penalty of being divided, or cut in sunder, as those parts were, if they should violate the same^b. Hence the word *charat*, in the Hebrew, which signifies properly to cut in sunder, is applied in Scripture to the making a contract or covenant^c.

^u As it happened among the Jews, Gen. xvi. 5. xxx. 15. 1 Sam. i. 2, 6.

^x Gen. xxxiv. 12. ^y Gen. xxix. 18. See 1 Sam. xviii. 25. 2 Sam. iii. 14. Hos. iii. 2.

^z Gen. xxvi. 26—31. ^a Gen. xxxi. 44, 45, 46, and 54. Compare 1 Kings i. 7, 9, 25. ^b See Gen. xv. 9, 10, 17, 18. and Jer. xxxiv. 18. ^c Mede, book ii. c. 7.

Afterwards, when the law of Moses was established, the people feasted (in their peace-offerings) on a part of their sacrifice, in token of their reconciliation with God^z. And thus in the Lord's Supper we renew our covenant with God, being at his table feasted by him, with the bread and wine, the representation of the sacrifice of his body and blood, which he offered for our sins upon the cross.

Thus much for the general remarks on the Pentateuch.

CHAP. III.

The Scripture history, from the Creation to the Fall of our first Parents.

IN the beginning of Genesis^a; we have an account of the creation of the world; that it was made, with all the creatures therein, by the word and power of God^b, in the space of six days, (for the manifestation of his own glory, and to communicate of his goodness to his creatures, *after the counsel of his own will.*) It was requisite that Moses should begin with the creation, that the church might have a sure foundation of faith against the false notions of the Gentiles, both concerning the original of the world, and also the being of the only true God, the Maker of all things; and also to satisfy the Israelites, that he who gave them laws, was the same who was the King and Governor of the whole world. In this history of the creation of the world we may observe,

First, That we read no account of angels, (unless it be here implied^c, *Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them,*) it being Moses's chief design to shew the creation of mankind, and of other creatures for his use. However, in other places of holy Scripture we learn, that the

^z Deut. xii. 6, 7. ^a Chap. i. and ii. ^b If we understand *Bara, created*, chap. i. 1. to signify, as it is used, verse 27. *so God created man*, that is, out of some pre-existent matter, *the dust of the ground*, chap. ii. 7. then we must suppose a two-fold creation, viz. *first*, of a rude matter, which was created out of nothing; and *secondly*, of the creatures out of that pre-existent matter; so that still God made all things out of nothing. ^c Chap. ii. 1.

angels are a part of God's creation^d, and are his *ministers* which *stand before him* to adore and honour him, and *do his pleasure*^e. And also are *sent forth to minister unto* the members of the church of God, *the heirs of salvation*^f, to assist them, and deliver them from many dangers in this life^g, and at their death to conduct their souls into paradise^h. But it seems many of the angels fell from their first and happy state by sinning against God, (after what manner is not mentionedⁱ.) And these are the evil spirits, who have a kind of principality in this lower world, and *work in the children of disobedience*^k; having a power secretly to seduce and tempt to sin, (possibly by moving the animal spirits, and thereby defiling the imagination,) to occasion men's forfeiting their interest in God's favour, as they have lost the same themselves^l. However, as they can but entice, not compel, so, if we do not yield to, but resist their temptations by prayer and watchfulness, we have a promise that they shall flee from us^m.

Secondly, That before God made man, he provided a well-furnished habitation for him; for mankind was made last of all, and found ready prepared for him all things conducing to his well-being, for his necessity and satisfaction.

Thirdly, That although the creatures in their respective kinds are preserved and propagated according to those laws of nature the Creator was pleased to give them in their fixed and settled stateⁿ, yet we are not to pretend that those laws were to be observed in the first creation^o of them; for the

^d Psal. cxlviii. 2, 5. ^e Isa. vi. 2, 3. Dan. vii. 10. Psal. ciii. 21. ^f Heb. i. 4.
^g Dan. vi. 22. Acts xii. 7. ^h Luke xvi. 22. ⁱ 2 Pet. ii. 4. Jude 6. ^k Eph.
 ii. 2. v. 12. ^l Jude 6. ^m Jam. iv. 7. ⁿ Scilicet ut *ab ovo omnia*. Quem-
 admodum in plantarum seminibus, plantula, suis jamjam conformata partibus,
 (foliis quæ primo erumpunt, gemma, et radícula,) tamdiu tegumentis suis inclusa
 delitescit, quamdiu idoneo humore minus perfunditur aut irrigatur, (ad multos
 interdum annos:) ita fundamentum futuræ prolis, in ovulo humano positum, eo
 usque quiescit, donec spirituosus seminis virilis contagiosa quadam fermentatione
 actuatum se-e exserat, et motum vitalem acquirat. *D. Goller. in Ephem. German.*
An. 12. Obs. 143. apud D. Rai. Synop. Animalium, cap. 1. De Animalibus in genere,
Quæst. 3. p. 42. ^o The maxim of Epicurus, that "out of nothing nothing can
 be produced," is grounded upon observation of things produced by the ordinary
 way of generation and corruption, ever since the first creation of them, but is of no
 validity against a creation itself.

herbs and fruit-trees now spring out of the seed, but at first were produced with their seed in them^p; and now they are nourished by the influence of the sun; but they were made before there was any sun. To reduce the creation of the world to the laws of motion which now prevail in it, is as if an Indian should attempt to give an account of the making of a watch, by the several motions which he sees performed in it after it is made, and should imagine, that the materials moving in such a manner, at last arrived to the exact frame of a watch.

Fourthly, It has been observed by those, who with diligence have enquired into the works of the great Creator, and compared them with the most exact pieces that are perfected by the art of man, that these last mentioned are so inaccurate, even those which seem to be most artificial and neat, that when examined, (particularly by the help of magnifying glasses,) the more we see of their shape, the less appearance will there be of their beauty, and the more rude and inartificial they shew themselves to be: whereas, in the works of nature, the deeper discoveries shew us the greater excellences; and the more strictly we view them, the more nice and admirable they appear; an evident argument, that he who was the Author of these things, was no other than the all-wise and all-powerful God^q.

Fifthly, As the works of the creation are the most perfect in their kinds, so they are ordered with plain and wise design, to minister to the admirable ends and purposes for which they were made, whether we consider the whole globe of the earth and seas, or the bodies of animals, and the several organs or parts thereof; all which are exactly adapted to

^p Gen. i. 11. The text, *whose seed is in itself*, may be explained by an observation lately made, that plants contain in themselves male and female powers: for example, that the dust of the apices in flowers (i. e. the male sperm) is conveyed into the *uterus* or *vasculum seminale* of the plant, by which means the seeds therein are impregnated; which was experienced by taking out all the apices of divers tulips before the *farina fœcundans* was ripe, which tulips bore no seed when others did. Mr. Bradley. ^q For this remark, see the several observations of Mr. Hooke, Mr. Ray, and Mr. Derham.

their respective uses; whereby it sufficiently appears, that no parts of the world had their being by chance, but that all of them are the product of the divine infinite power, and wisdom, and goodness^r: more particularly, *1st*, if we reflect on the power of gravity, (or tendency to a centre,) whereby the several parts of the creation are united, and fast bound up, and so preserved from being shattered and dispersed, which their circular motion would otherwise occasion. In the second place, the sun affords light and heat, a grateful variety of seasons, and its salutary cherishing beams to the living creatures and plants. *3dly*, The moon enlightens the air, takes away in some measure the disconsolate darkness of winter nights, procures or regulates the motion and flowing of the sea, thereby preserving the water thereof from putrifying, and rendering it more wholesome for its breed. *4thly*, As for the four elements, (commonly so called,) *viz.* fire, water, earth, and air; the fire cherishes and revives by its heat, and prepares our food: the water affords a great share of matter to things that are produced, and is a part of our sustenance, besides the uses of washing, bathing, and preparing victuals: the earth is the foundation and support of all animals and plants, and yields our food and nourishment: the air serves us and all animals to breathe in, nourishing and keeping up the vital flame in the blood, without which we could not subsist; to which end it is endued with a natural weight and elastic or springing power, whereby it so forcibly insinuates itself into the bodies of animals, and even plants themselves. *Lastly*, The several organs of our senses are the most fitly and curiously adapted to the proper uses of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching. Who can forbear to imitate the Psalmist's admiration of the wise and gracious designs of God, manifest in the creatures, '*O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all.*'

Sixthly, We find that the creation of mankind is twice mentioned^s, not as if there were any Pre-Adamites, or people

^r Ray's Wisdom of God in the Creation. Mr. Derham's Physico-Theology.

^s Psal. civ. 24. ^t Gen. i. 26. and ii. 7.

before Adam, spoken of in the first chapter, and another original of the Jewish nation in the second; for then Moses could not have said, after the first mentioning the creation of mankind, that *God rested from all his works which he had made* ^u, that is, ceased to make any more creatures; nor could Eve have been *the mother of all living*, that is, of all mankind ^v; but Moses having mentioned the creation of mankind in the account he gives of the six days' work in general ^w, he comes in the second chapter to give us a more particular relation of the creation of the first man and of the first woman, Adam and Eve, and of the institution of marriage.

In this account of the creation of mankind, there are six things remarkable; the *first*, That the body of man was formed out of the earth, and the body of the woman from that of the man; and the body being perfected, God *breathed* into it *the breath of life*, (which is not said of other creatures,) or united a rational immortal soul to that body ^x. Whence he hath instructed us, that however the beasts perish when they die, yet the soul being not produced from the body, as flame from oil, but inspired therein by God, is of an immaterial substance, and lives and remains after the body is dead and corrupted. Some divines observe further, that “in this insufflation, or breathing, the rational soul of Adam was impressed with the divine character, or touched with the virtue of the Holy Spirit, that is, received a supernatural principle, in order to a supernatural end, *viz.* heavenly bliss, besides the seeds of natural religion sown in his mind; and that this spirit is renewed in baptism.” Hence we read the distinction in Scripture between the *carnal* man, that gratifies the senses of his body; the *natural* man, that exercises the understanding of the rational soul; and the *spiritual* man, or one that apprehends spiritual things, and is disposed to receive them by the assistance of the divine Spirit ^y.

^u Ch. ii. 3. ^v Ch. iii. 20. or, as Acts xvii. 26. *God made of one blood all nations of men.* ^w Gen. i. ^x Gen. ii. 7. ^y Compare 1 Thess. v. 23. and 1 Cor. ii. 14. Bishop Bull of the State of Man before the Fall; and Dr. Whitby in loca citata.

2dly, That God did not form Eve out of the ground, as he had done Adam, but out of his side, that he might breed the greater love between him and her, as part of the same whole; whereby he also effectually recommended marriage to all mankind, as founded in nature, and as the re-union of man and woman^z.

3dly, Moses represents God expressing himself in a peculiar manner at the creation of mankind^a, not as when the other creatures were formed, *Let there be light; Let the earth bring forth grass; and, Let the earth bring forth the living creatures, &c.* but, *Let us make man in our image, &c.* Which some understand as spoken after the manner of kings, (either on the account of dignity or modesty,) like to, *We order and command; Given at our court, &c.* Others, as if the words should be rendered, *Let man be made;* and some, as if God spake to the angels. But^b, 1. There is no reasoning from the custom and propriety of one people or language to that of another; and the instances brought from Scripture do not prove an imitation of kings, but a consulting with and comprehending courtiers or friends. 2. Neither should the words be rendered, *Let man be made,* because the languages derived from the Hebrew (as the Chaldean, Syriac, and Arabic) render the words to the same sense as in our Bibles^c, *Let us make man in our image,* and so do divers of the most learned Jews. And, lastly, As for consulting with, or employing the angels, God says here, *Let us make man in our image,* and let *them* have dominion over the creatures: but man was not made in the image of angels, nor have the angels such dominion; and therefore the generality of the primitive Christians, who lived nearest the times of the Apostles, who had occasion to mention this passage, understand it as denoting the holy Trinity^d, and as representing God the Father speaking to the Son, or to the Son and Holy Ghost, especially

^z Matt. xix. 5. ^a Gen. i. 26. ^b See at large Glassii Philolog. Sacr. lib. iii. tract. 3. can. 51. and Dr. Knight, Sermon. i. ^c Polyglot Bibl. ^d As Just. Martyr. Trypho, p. 185. edit. Jebb. Tertul. adv. Praxeam, c. xii. Epiph. Hæres. 46. num. 3.

because none but the supreme God is in Scripture said to have made the world, or to have formed mankind ^e.

4thly, Whereas mankind is said to be made *in the image of God*¹, it is not in respect to the body, for God is a spirit; but, in the first place, in respect to the excellency of the nature of man, and the endowments and faculties of his soul, which are peculiar to him ^e, as having a good degree of knowledge, and endowed with so great a measure of reason, and the freedom of his will: and, *lastly*, resembling God in a state of innocency and purity, (though not immutable,) according to *the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness*^h. This was lost by sin, but is in some measure *renewed* in us by the grace of God in Christ¹, and shall be more fully renewed and perfected in heaven.

5thly, Man, being so intelligent a creature, was at his creation placed in such an eminent station, as to represent God, and to be, as it were, his deputy on earth, having a dominion and power over the rest of the creatures, *over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air; over the cattle, and over all the earth*^k. Which privilege God renewed after the flood, that *the fear and dread* of mankind should be upon the other creatures^l, insomuch that^m the wild *beasts of the forest* keep in their dens, till *darkness* invites man to rest, and then they securely come forth to seek food; but when *the sun ariseth*, and man *goeth forth*, they return to their dens. And although some creatures are very wild and fierce, and also excel in strength and swiftness, yet mankind is able to subject them all by art and reasonⁿ; whence even the heathen con-

^e Isa. xxiv. 44. Gen. i. 27. and ii. 7. ^f Gen. i. 26, 27. ^g Legatur Maimon. Mor. Nevoch. pars i. ad finem cap. i. ^h Eph. iv. 24. ⁱ As verse 23.
^k Gen. i. 28. ^l Gen. ix. 2. ^m As Psalm civ. 20, &c. ⁿ As for the inferior living creatures, what some call instinct in them, seems rather to be a lower degree of reason and thought, and liberty of choosing, sufficient for the ends and purposes designed in the creation; but not such as is necessary to make them capable of good or evil, or consequently of rewards and punishments. Indeed they generally pursue the same way in most of their actions, especially such as tend to their food, or to preserve their young, (as bees for their combs, fowls for their nests, &c.) and do not vary nor use divers methods, as the reason of mankind often occasions them to do; yet one may instance in many actions of brutes that which

cluded, that the world was made for man^a. And in respect to this dominion over the creatures, as well as the other excellencies above mentioned, the Apostle seems to understand *the image of God* in man^b, where he gives that as a reason why *the man ought not to cover his head*, as a sign of subjection; *forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God*, in his dominion over the rest of the world; according to the Psalmist, *Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour; thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.*

6thly, The same great Creator, who distinguished man from the other creatures by so large a degree of reason, and a dominion over them, did also distinguish him in two other regards, *viz.* by the erect posture of his body, not bending downwards like other living creatures, but as looking up towards heaven; as also by speech, having adapted proper organs, as the tongue and lips, thereto. The first language was given by God to Adam and Eve; and was derived to their posterity as from one common stock, by imitation and use, and continued the same, until the destruction of Babel after the flood^c, at which time God divided their language, and gave one sort to one family, and another to another, for the putting an end to their pride and vanity in building the tower of Babel; and for sorting them into several companies, for the better peopling of the earth. The first language is by very learned men supposed to be Hebrew; *first*, Because of the names given to some men and places, at the beginning, from the Hebrew original; as of Adam, from a Hebrew word which signifies *red dust*, because he was made of the dust of the earth; and Eve, from a Hebrew word which signifies *to*

can hardly be accounted for, without allowing them some degree of reason and argumentation, though but obscure in respect to ours, as of horses, dogs, foxes, &c. And it is not our business to dispute how the great Creator disposes of the souls of brutes, or of any other the works of his hands. As for ourselves, we know that *Christ hath brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel.* Vide Mr. Ray's *Wisdom of God in the Creation*, part i. p. 43. of the second edition, London, 1692.

^a Cicero de Officiis primo, apud Grotius de Verit. Relig. Christianæ, lib. i. §. 7.

^b 1 Cor. xi. 7. ^c Psalm viii. 5, 6. ^d Gen. xi.

live, because Eve was the mother of all living, &c. *Secondly*, Because those people who live nearest to Babel, where the language was divided, still retain great remains of the Hebrew language, as the Chaldeans, Syrians, Arabians, &c. insomuch that the Hebrew tongue being first understood, the language of the others is easier obtained^e. When we read this history of the creation, we ought to adore and admire the infinite power, and wisdom, and goodness of God, especially his love to mankind.

Farthermore, in the second chapter, Moses shews that God, having finished all the works of the creation in six days, and having rested on the seventh day, (that is, ceased to make any more,) was pleased to sanctify the seventh day, which was a clear declaration of his will, that it should be a day set apart for the honour and worship of him the only true God, and Maker of heaven and earth; as he more fully explained himself in the fourth Commandment; of which afterwards.

Here also we farther read of the favour of God to mankind, in placing our first parents Adam and Eve in Paradise, or the garden of Eden, (which word signifies pleasure and delight,) in a most delightful and comfortable state; where was also the tree of life, which either had the virtue, by its fruit, to prevent diseases, preserve and repair the natural strength and temperament of the body, and so prolong life, (which some esteem most probable, and that by reason of this virtue thereof, the flaming sword kept man from it after the fall^f;) or else was a sign of God's covenant and promise, that so long as mankind did not commit sin, or transgress the commands of their Maker, so long they should still live and be preserved from decaying, and from death^g; otherwise it should seem that our bodies are subject to decays and death in their original constitution. We are not to enquire how the earth could have at once contained all mankind of all generations, supposing none to have sinned or died, or how long they should have continued in Paradise, and when taken up into

^e Ep. Walton, Prolegom. in Bibl. Polyglot. num. 3. where also objections are answered. ^f Gen. iii. 24. ^g Gen. ii. 9. compared with Rom. v. 12.

heaven, &c. but to be content with what God hath revealed concerning the fall, and the redemption by Christ.

In the next place, we are informed that God was pleased to make trial of the obedience of our first parents, by allowing them to eat of all other fruit, except of one tree, the *tree of knowledge of good and evil*, so called either as having the virtue to open their understandings, and make them more wise and knowing, according as the tempter pretended^b; or from the effect of their eating, they thereby becoming sensible of the good of obedience, and the evil of transgression: of this tree he commanded them not to eatⁱ. It has been observed, that there was a covenant of life made with man in this state of innocency, and not only a law imposed on him; for the prohibition given to Adam, concerning the not eating of the tree of knowledge, is ushered in with this express donation or grant of God, that he might freely eat of all the rest of the trees in Paradise, the tree of life excepted; so that on condition of the performance of his part of the covenant, in not eating of the tree of knowledge, he was to continue in Paradise, and enjoy the benefit of the tree of life, and live for ever^k.

CHAP. IV.

From the fall of our first Parents, to Cain and Abel's birth

Gen. iii. **WE** understand how our first parents were tempted, and beguiled by the old serpent the devil, to forfeit their interest in the covenant, and offend God, by eating the forbidden fruit. The devil might either take upon him the form and shape of a serpent, or else use the body of a serpent, as an instrument or organ out of which to speak, and therefore he is called *the old serpent*^l, and by our Saviour, *a murderer from the beginning*^m. Probably the serpent, of which the devil took the shape, or whose body he used, was of that species which could fly in the air, in the eastern countries, as in Arabia, and appeared shining like fire, and thereby re-

^b Joseph. Antiq. book i. ch. 2.
of the State of Man before the Fall.

ⁱ Gen. ii. 9—18.
^l Rev. xii. 9.

^k Bishop Bull's Discourse
^m John viii. 44.

sembled one of the seraphims, or illustrious angelsⁿ; whereby Eve, apprehending him as one of the usual attendants of God, when he appeared to Adam and her, might be the easier beguiled^o: and his being condemned^p, *upon thy belly shalt thou go*, intimates, that he did not move so before. There is the less reason to wonder that the devil should make use of a serpent when he tempted our first parents, seeing he has all along, in former and latter ages, seduced mankind to idolatry, by being worshipped in the form of a serpent^q. The temptations are expressed in these words, that their *eyes should be opened*, and they should be *as gods, knowing good and evil*; that the forbidden tree was *good for food, pleasant to the eyes, and to be desired to make one wise^r*: so that the moving cause of our first parents' apostasy was an imagination of an increase in wisdom and knowledge, and of some other unknown satisfaction; which put them on trying an experiment of the effects of tasting the forbidden fruit, for the obtaining it.

Our first parents having transgressed against God, lost his favour, were cast out of Paradise, banished from the tree of life, and became subject to sin, and labour, and trouble, and to sickness and death.

This transgression, and the effect of it in the corruption of our nature, is termed *original sin*, or the *fall of our first parents*: in which five things are observable; *first*, This command of not eating the forbidden fruit, though it may seem slight and trivial, yet was the most proper for the trial of our first parents, in that time and place; for what else could have been enjoined them? They could not be supposed so soon to worship any other for God than their Creator; nor to be guilty of perjury, when there were no courts nor dealings to occasion it: they had no parents to honour; they could have no temptations to murder or adultery, when there were none but them two; nor to covet or cheat in the midst of such delights and plenty in Paradise, which they were the sole lords of; but it was most agreeable to their present state, for the

ⁿ See Isaiah xiv. 29, and vi. 6. ^o Archbishop Tenison of Idolatry, ch. xiv. p. 352. and see chap. ii. of this Treatise concerning the Shechinah. ^p Gen. iii. 14.
^q Archbishop Tenison, *ibid.* ^r Gen. iii. 5, 6.

trial of their obedience, to be forbidden some indifferent thing, as the eating of a particular fruit in the garden where they lived. Again, this precept for their trial was not without its difficulties, because it laid a restraint both on their natural and rational appetites; for the tree was *pleasant to the eyes*^s, and so on that account the more alluring, and consequently the greater trial: it was also a tree *to be desired to make one wise*. Now the desire of knowledge being so strong in man, it was the greater experiment of Adam's obedience to refrain from what he might apprehend to be a means of satisfying his curiosity, and increasing his knowledge.

Secondly, This transgression in eating was no slight offence, as it may seem to be; for we are not so much to consider the bare action, namely, the eating of one particular sort of fruit, as the disobedience to the commands of the great and infinite God, who had so lately made them, and gave the rest of his creatures to be subject to them; that they should yet affront his majesty, despise his authority and power, slight his goodness, and believe and trust the devil above their God, nay, (through intolerable pride and arrogancy,) should presume even to equal their Maker himself, to be as gods^t.

Thirdly, Great was the disorder which this sin brought on our first parents, which has been thus explained; forasmuch as they had bodies to take care of and refresh, God gave them senses, by the mediation of which they should perceive pleasures in the use of those things which were adapted to the preservation and comfort of life and being, as in eating, drinking, and propagating the same kind; nevertheless, being created to love and glorify God, they must be supposed to have their minds enlightened, so as to understand their duty and greatest happiness, and to have those suitable inclinations and spiritual delights infused into them, which might counterbalance the greatest pleasures of sense, and incline them most towards God, as their chiefest good; and yet, being free agents, they might (as they did) abuse the freedom of their will, and suffer themselves to be swayed by their natural appetites, and the pleasures of sense, to sin against God^u.

^s Gen. iii. 6.

^t Gen. iii. 5.

^u So that the origin of evil does not (as some of the ancient Pagans fancied) proceed from any evil demon, the supreme principle

Now by sinning they forfeited their title to that extraordinary grace and assistance before mentioned, and were in a manner left alone to their natural inclinations towards sensible pleasures, which occasioned a miserable disorder and confusion, and brought mankind into a state of corruption and degeneracy, which must needs be very deplorable, when they were abandoned by their Maker, and exposed to all the temptations of the devil and their own affections and frail nature. One effect was ^v, *The eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked*; that is, they felt such a change upon the commission of sin, that they thereby apprehended an unseemliness in nakedness, which they did not before. Guilt caused confusion, and a conception of shame in what before was natural, and seemed not indecent, and made them *cover themselves with fig-leaves, and hide themselves among the trees of the garden* ^w.

Fourthly, This transgression of our first parents affects us their posterity; for they being driven out of Paradise, and from the tree of life, lost their title to the delights of Paradise, and to immortal life, for themselves and all their posterity; as when a subject is convicted of high treason, and forfeits his estate, his posterity must be beggared too: whence we are all subject to labour and sorrow, to sickness and death.

Furthermore, as our first parents, by their apostasy from God, lost their innocency, and forfeited their interest in that spiritual assistance above mentioned, whereby their natural appetites were grown exorbitant and commanding, and their very natures were stained and polluted; so from this corrupted stock we descend, and (as *a corrupt tree cannot but bring forth evil fruit*) there is “a fault or corruption of the nature of every man, which naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam^x.” This is called *the old man*^y, being that corrupted state of nature we derive from the old or first Adam, contrary to the *new man*^z,

of evil, (in opposition to a good demon, the supreme principle of good,) but from this corrupt abuse of the natural power, the liberty of the will; neither is it inconsistent with the perfection of an infinite Being, to endow his creatures with such a liberty or power. See Just. Mart. Apol. i. §. 36, and 55. edit. Grabe. ^v Gen. iii. 7.

^w Indicatur rem quandam in homine ortam fuisse, qua turpe in se agnovit id, quod antea nullo modo turpe habebat. *Maimon. Mor. Nevach. lib. i. c. 2.*

^x The ninth Article of the Church. ^y Eph. iv. 22. ^z Ver. 24.

that state of regeneration or grace, wherein we are placed by faith in Christ, the second or new Adam. Hence our rational part is borne down and enslaved by the sensible; not only our bodies are decaying, but also *the flesh lusteth against the spirit*: we derive from our first parents the seeds and principles of natural corruption; and this experience frequently teaches us, that the moral inclinations of parents, as well as their depraved constitutions, are propagated to their children; and when it is otherwise, as that vicious parents have virtuous children, that is, because the inclinations, being vicious in either, are subdued by the assistance of the grace and Spirit of God; so that in general our judgments are prone to error, and our affections depraved: we all sadly experience a proneness to act against reason and sound principles, and a strong bias towards evil: so much do we partake of the bitterness and impurity of the fountain from which we spring^a: which general corruption of our nature is often mentioned in the holy Scriptures^b.) This stain or pollution of the soul by sin being contrary to *righteousness and true holiness*, cannot but be offensive to God; the consequence whereof is our being born *the children of wrath*, or subject to the wrath of God, without being cleansed by Christ's blood in the *laver of regeneration*, by the sacrament of baptism. As for the *immaculate conception* of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, we are to remember, that although he received the substance of his human body from the Virgin Mary^c, yet he received his life and formation, which alone are capable of a mortal or moral contagion, from the immediate power of God, from which nothing that is impure can come; therefore, though our Saviour be the offspring of Adam, according to his human nature, yet he is not the sinful and polluted offspring.

The dévil prevailed on our first parents by a downright lie; for whereas God had threatened that they should die, or be-

^a Melanethon Apol. sive corpus Doctrinae Christianae. De Peccato Originis. *Quia omnes peccaverunt*, Rom. v. 12. Hebraica Phrasis est, peccaverunt, i. e. rei sunt, et habent peccatum, rem malam et damnatam. Omnes peccaverunt, i. e. in omnes propagatum est malum, quod est peccatum. ^b As Gen. vi. 5. Jer. xvii. 9. Gal. v. 17. Eph. iv. 22. ^c See chap. iii. obs. 3. note, *de ovulo humano*.

come mortal, upon their eating the forbidden fruit, the devil assured them on the contrary, *Ye shall not surely die*^d. Hence Christ said of him, that he was *a liar, and the father of it*^e. So that all liars are the very children of the devil, and do the works of the devil.

As to the curse on the serpent, mentioned in this history^f, *Thou art cursed above all cattle; upon thy belly shalt thou go*; though he was only the instrument by which the devil acted, and had neither will nor understanding to offend; we are to consider, that as the ox which should gore a man was ordered to be stoned^g, to shew the value which God set on man's life, and to secure it, (the owner being obliged hereby to take care to prevent it, or lose his beast;) so the serpent was cursed by God, (who, being the sovereign Lord of all his creatures, might do with them as he pleased,) to shew the foulness of sin, and to excite sinners to repentance, and deter men from the commission of sin, when they behold a creature which was but the instrument so debased; and there was no more injustice in changing the form of the serpent for man's sake, than in suffering other creatures to be slain for his food; especially since they were made by God for the use of man, in one kind or other.

What follows,^h *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel*, contains the first establishment of the covenant of grace, or of the Gospel, which was afterwards renewed with Abrahamⁱ, (although this passage is not particularly applied to Christ in the New Testament, yet he is therein said to be promised to Abraham under the term of the *Seed*^k.) Here we read the gracious promise of Christ's deliverance of the church, and the malice and destiny of the devil, under the representation of the enmity between the seed or offspring of the woman, (that is, some one of mankind.) and the seed or kind of serpents. Man is able to reach the serpent's head where a blow is deadly;

^d Gen. iii. 4. ^e John viii. 44. ^f Gen. iii. 14. ^g Exod. xxi. 28. ^h Gen. iii. 15. ⁱ Gen. xii. 3. ^k Gal. iii. 16.

but the serpent can only seize on man by the heel. Thus the true seed of the woman, Jesus Christ, (so called because he took on him our nature from the Virgin Mary, one of the seed or offspring of Eve,) was to *bruise the serpent's head*, that is, destroy the work and power of the devil, who was the author of sin, and death, and misery; whereas the serpent, the devil, could only *bruise his heel*, by his instruments persecute and crucify him, and also, as far as he can, persecute the members of his church.

Here it may be proper, for the present, to remark briefly, that this promised Seed was afterwards called the Messiah, or Christ. *Messiah* is Hebrew, and *Christ* is Greek¹, and both signify the same thing, that is, *Anointed*. The anointing of things or persons with oil was an ancient rite of consecration, or dedicating them to a peculiar and sacred use^m. Hence our Lord, being that promised Seed, and ordained by the Father to be the Saviour of mankind, and for that purpose being *anointed*, not with material oil, but with the Holy Spiritⁿ, was called the *Messiah*, that is, the *Anointed*, or *Christ*^o: and therefore Andrew told his brother, *we have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ*^v.

Here we may also further remark, that the sending into the world this Seed, or this Messiah, (or Christ,) was the grand design of God from the beginning; and accordingly he was some way or other, by degrees, discovered to the world, as God, in his unsearchable wisdom, had determined should be done, so far as was most suitable to every age thereof. It was sufficient for Adam to be assured he should come from some one of the seed of Eve; but Abraham was to be further encouraged in the expectancy of his proceeding from one of his own particular family: and Jacob had an account given him concerning the season of his appearance.

¹ The Latins, being strangers to the Jewish customs, called him *Chrestus*, and the Christians *Chrestiani*. Suetonius. in Vita Claudii, cap. 25. Tertull. adversus Gentes. See Bishop Pearson on the second Article of the Creed, *Jesus Christ*, p. 79. ^m Gen. xxviii. 18. Lev. viii. 11. Exod. xxx. 30. ⁿ Acts x. 38. ^o Dan. ix. 26. ^p John i. 41. Note, the word *Messiah*, with an *h*, is nearer to the Hebrew; and *Messias*, with an *s*, is suitable to the Greek pronunciation. The former is here chosen.

Further, he was to be represented by the most eminent persons recorded in Scripture: thus the New Testament informs us, that Christ is *the second Adam*[¶], and *a priest after the order of Melchisedec*[†]; *faithful as Moses*[§]; with more the like. He was also typified or shadowed in the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish religion, foretold by the ancient prophets, and more and more gradually discovered; nay, the very body of the children of Israel, their deliverances, (especially out of Egypt,) their land of Canaan, and all the privileges appropriated to their nation, do in a more eminent manner represent, or appertain to the blessings and benefits procured by this Messiah, and belonging to his church, the heavenly Jerusalem, as being what the infinite wisdom, and power, and goodness of God designed to effect, when *the fulness of time* should come; as we shall afterwards see more particularly[†].

In the mean time, the reader is advised to bear in his mind these two last remarks all along, in reading the holy Scriptures.

Lastly, Whereas[¶] Adam is threatened with the ground's *bringing forth thorns and thistles*, we are not to think those to be a new species or kind of plants, but rather that they should more abound for the increase of man's labour, and sweat of his brow.

CHAP. V.

From Cain and Abel's birth to God's covenant with Abraham.

Gen. iv. WE read of Cain and Abel's birth, who were the first offspring of mankind. It is observable, that when Eve had brought forth Cain, she said, ^v *I have gotten a man from the Lord*; by which she might hope for and mean the Messiah, or the promised Seed above mentioned[¶]. Many, with good reason, apprehend, that the impatient longing for children, so often mentioned in the history of the first ages of the world,

¶ 1 Cor. xv. 45. † Heb. v. § Heb. iii. † In the reasons assigned for the ceremonial ordinances, and in the first general Remark on the Gospels. ¶ Gen. iii. 17, 18. v Gen. iv. 1. ¶ Gen. iii. 15.

proceeded from the eager desire of being a mother to the promised Seed, the Messiah; particularly, that this was the reason of Sarah's giving her maid Hagar unto Abraham to go *in unto her*^s, before she had a child of her own; and of Rachel and Leah, giving each their maid unto their husband Jacob^r, since the children which were born of a bond-slave were reckoned as the children of the mistress, whose the bond-slave was.

In the next place^r, we have the account of Cain and Abel's offering; of God's acceptance of Abel, who offered by faith^a, with a pious mind, and such a sense of God and his favour, that he brought *the firstlings of his flock, and the fat thereof*, that is, the first and best of the kind, which it does not appear that Cain did. It may be also said, that Abel, who understood the promise of the Messiah, offered by faith, or in testimony of his belief of that future perfect oblation of his: and God's expostulation with Cain, *b If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door*, seems to intimate the want of moral righteousness in him. God is said to *have respect unto Abel's offering*, though he rejected Cain's^c, which respect might be shewn by some ray or stream of light shining upon it from his glory, or shechinah, before mentioned; or by consuming Abel's sacrifice by fire from heaven; for in that manner it pleased God oftentimes to give evidence of his favourable acceptance of the offerings of his servants^d. Hence what we translate, *e Accept thy burnt-sacrifice*, is in Hebrew, *Let him reduce it into ashes*.

Next we read^f of Abel's murder, and Cain's offspring, and of the piety of Seth's posterity; who *began to call upon the name of the Lord*^e, that is, in some peculiar and solemn manner not used before; or as others, *called themselves by the name of the Lord*, to distinguish themselves from the profane and ungodly posterity of Cain: hence that holy offspring of Seth are called *the sons of God*^h.

Eve was *the mother of all living*ⁱ, that is, all mankind de-

^x Gen. xvi. 2. ^y Gen. xxx. ^z Gen. iv. 3 ^a Heb. xi. 4. ^b Gen. iv. 7.

^c Gen. iv. 4. ^d Gen. xv. 17. Levit. ix. 24. 1 Kings xviii. 32. 1 Chron. xxi. 26.

^e Psal. xx. 3. ^f Gen. iv. 8. ^g Ver. 26. ^h Gen. vi. 2. ⁱ Gen. iii. 20.

scended from Adam and her. It is said, indeed, that Cain was afraid lest any who met him should kill him, that he dwelt in the land of Nod, and had a wife, and built a city: which supposes a great number of people then in the world; which might well be, and all descend from Adam and Eve; for Adam was an hundred and thirty years old when Seth was born^k, and Seth was given them by God instead of Abel, whom Cain slew^l; and therefore most likely he was born soon after the murder was committed: whence Adam must be allowed to be an hundred and thirty years of age when Cain fled and built his city: in which time he had doubtless a great many sons and daughters, which are not mentioned; and his offspring might well be increased to a great number, especially when we consider that the first people were more than ordinarily fruitful, according to the divine benediction, and *multiplied and replenished the earth*^m. Again, it was not the design of Moses, to give us a particular account of the whole race of mankind descended from Adam; of whom he says in generalⁿ, that he *begat sons and daughters*; but only of those persons that were most remarkable, and whose story was necessary to be known for the understanding of the succession to Abraham.

Gen. v. contains an account of the posterity of Adam by his son Seth; Cain and his offspring are not there mentioned, as being a wicked and ungodly generation of men, and who all perished in the flood; but Seth and his posterity, who were the holy seed, and from whence Noah, and Abraham, and the Messiah were derived: and therefore the genealogy here set down shews the lineal descent of Jesus Christ the Messiah, according to the flesh, from Adam to Noah. These here mentioned, *viz.* Seth, Enos, &c. were the Patriarchs before the flood^o. The Patriarchs after the flood were, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with his twelve sons; these last are in particular called, *the twelve Patriarchs*^p.

Gen. vi. 1—12. we read, that such was the corruption of mankind, as to occasion a distinction between those who kept

^k Gen. v. 3. ^l Gen. iv. 25. ^m Gen. i. 28. ⁿ Gen. v. 4. ^o The word *Patriarch* signifies chief father of a tribe or family. ^p Acts vii. 8, 9. Heb. vii. 4.

to the true religion, and were called *the sons*, or children, of *God*; and those who deserted it, or the children of men. Some of the sons of God, that is, the holy posterity of Seth ⁹, by degrees began to intermarry with the *daughters of men*, or the irreligious posterity of Cain: the sad consequence whereof was the commission of such provoking sins, as caused God to bring a flood upon the whole earth; yet not till after an hundred and twenty years' warning; in which time the ark was preparing, to preserve Noah and his family, and two of every sort of creatures ^r.

We are not to suppose that all things mentioned from the beginning of Genesis to the sixth chapter were effected soon after each other, because they immediately succeeded in the story: there was a long interval of time between some of them; for this part of the Bible contains all we know of the history of the world for above sixteen hundred years.

Gen. vi. 13. and chap. vii. viii. ix. we read of the sad effects of sin in the history of the flood; wherewith not only one part, but the whole earth was covered^s; as also by the preservation of the several creatures, and particularly of mankind: we have here also an account how the world was again replenished. It is fruitless to enquire how the waters could cover the whole earth, any further than by the same power of God who made all things; for the ground of our belief thereof is not founded upon any natural causes, which we can assign; but we believe it, because Moses has informed us of it, who was divinely inspired.

Here we may observe, *first*, concerning *clean beasts*^t, that, as the distinction of clean and unclean beasts was made by the law of Moses, so this was written for those who understood the law and the expression. Some think, that as at first God might give people direction for sacrificing, (of which before,) so he might also direct what beasts were fit for sacrificing, that is, *clean*, and what were not, or *unclean*; which Noah, as a prophet, could discern^u. *Secondly*, That

⁹ See Gen. iv. 26. the marginal reading, and Deut. xiv. 1. ^r 1 Pet. iii. 20.
^s Gen. vii. 19. compared with 2 Pet. ii. 5. and iii. 6. ^t Gen. vii. 2. ^u Aliter
 Grotius. Immunda intelligi debent ea quæ Hominum victus naturaliter defugit,

God was pleased to preserve some living witnesses of the world's being destroyed by a flood of water, that the memory of such an instance of God's justice, power, and hatred of sin might be preserved to succeeding generations. *Thirdly*, That it is no security to ungodly persons that there are great numbers of them: and therefore none ought to encourage themselves in wickedness, because there are so many like themselves; but rather for that cause they ought to be so much the more apprehensive of speedy and dreadful judgments: for because *all flesh had corrupted themselves*, because of the greatness of their numbers, they were so much the nearer to their destruction. *Fourthly*, That the love and goodness of God is manifest, in that he was pleased to renew the promise made at the beginning of the subjection of the creatures to man, and to give them for his nourishment; and not only (as before) *the green herb*, but also living creatures^v; and further, to secure mankind from all fears of a deluge any more for ever, promising for the future, that there should not *any more be a flood to destroy the earth*; and making the rainbow to be a visible token of his covenant between himself and all flesh^w. Although the rainbow is occasioned by a reflection of the rays of the sun from a hollow cloud, or falling drops of rain; yet since every cloud is not fitly disposed to bring forth a rainbow, we know not if there were any such before the flood: it is sufficient, that for the future it was to be a sign of God's covenant. *Fifthly*, The ark was a type and figure of the church of Christ, as Noah and his family were of the members thereof; whose preservation in the flood also prefigured our redemption by *the laver of regeneration*, or baptism, as St. Peter explains it^x, *The like figure whereunto even baptism doth now save us*. *Sixthly*, From henceforward it pleased God to cut short the life of man, about half what it was before; and in the next age afterwards, man's life was again reduced to a much shorter space.

quæ profana dixit Tacitus Historiarum 6. nisi munda malis accipere, quæ herbis aluntur; immunda, quæ aliis pascuntur animalibus. De Verit. R. Christianæ, lib. v. §. 9. Annotat. ^v Gen. ix. 2, 3. ^w Gen. ix. 11, &c. ^x 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21.

Gen. x. gives us an account of the numerous offspring of Shem, Ham, and Japhet, the three sons of Noah; by whom, and their posterity, in successive ages, and by degrees more and more, the earth was replenished, or the several parts of the world inhabited. Of which three sons, though they are reckoned in the order mentioned^y, yet Ham was the younger^z, and Japhet the elder^a; but God preferred Shem, as he afterwards did Jacob, who was younger than Esau.

They had a pattern from the ark, for making vessels to sail on the waters, whereby *the isles of the Gentiles were divided in their lands*^b, no doubt those isles at the first which were nearest, and afterwards those more remote. By isles, in the Jewish language, ^care meant not only such places as we strictly call isles, being on all sides surrounded by the sea; but any countries which cannot be come at but by sea, or which are *beyond the sea*^d. And although America be at a greater distance from the rest, there might be some passages, especially northwards, that opened a nearer course to some part of that country, which have not been as yet discovered by latter ages: besides, the customs that modern travellers observe amongst the American people, agreeable to other nations, is an argument that all at the first were derived from the same stock; such as offering sacrifice to expiate sins, solemn marriage, &c. which conformity could not proceed from the reason itself of sacrificing, as a proper and natural means of expiation, (as hath been observed before,) nor from any natural notions common to all mankind; but from a general tradition, derived down from some common parents.

A person^e, who lately made a voyage to the South Sea, gives the following account: "There are many opinions about the peopling of America; but the most reasonable to me is, that it was peopled from Tartary, by way of the north pole; where they suppose it to join with some part of Asia. This I think very probable, because the Spaniards, who come

^y Gen. v. 32, and elsewhere. ^z Gen. ix. 22, 24. ^a Gen. x. 21. ^b Gen. x. 5.
^c Mede, Disc. 49. ^d Jer. xxv. 22. ^e Capt. Woodes Rogers's Cruising Voya_ge, Ann. 1709, 10. p. 324.

yearly hither from Manila or Luconia, one of the Philippine islands in the East Indies, are forced to keep in a high latitude, for the benefit of westerly winds, and have often sounded, finding ground in lat. 42. N. in several places of the ocean, betwixt the East Indies and America; which makes me conclude that there must be more land, &c.” So that no one can properly object against the peopling of America by the descendants of Noah, unless he could give an exact description of the limits of North America, and set forth all its borders.

The objection concerning different species of beasts, and other living creatures, being found in America, which are not known in other parts, is of no weight, since we also find divers animals peculiar to some countries, which are not in others on the same continent, as elephants, &c.

As for the negroes, or blacks, which are in Egypt, and other parts of Africa^f, it is evident that these countries were peopled by some of the descendants of Ham, or Cham, one of the sons of Noah; because it is said^g, that Jacob sojourned *in the land of Ham*, which means Egypt, whither Jacob and his family went from Canaan. Again, the very name of Egypt, in Hebrew, is Mizraim, from Mizraim, one of the sons of Ham, by whom and his descendants Egypt was at first planted. From the Psalmist's calling Egypt the *land of Ham*, it seems probable that Ham went thither himself, and there settled with his son Mizraim. Some have observed, that the denomination of the word Ham, or Cham, imports, that the blacks descended from him; for the Hebrew *Cham* signifies hot, and *Chum*, black or sun-burnt, from *Chamam*, to be hot: from which they conceive, that as the people of Africa were originally descended from Cham, so their colour was always the same. And it has been observed, that there are many negroes in Lisbon, as black as in Africa, though their progenitors had been transported into Portugal many years ago: so that the different qualities of the air and climate are not the cause of the alteration of colour^h.

^f Grotius aliique in Gen. x. 6. ^g Psal. cv. 23, 27. ^h Jahontan's View of North America, vol. i. letter 24. p. 190.

Gen. xi. 1—10. we read of the design of building an exceeding high tower to preserve *a name*^l, that the builders might be famous and renowned among posterity; and how God prevented it, by confounding their language; which came to pass somewhat above one hundred years after the flood. This confusion of tongues did not only serve to prevent the building of Babel, but was a ready way to people the earth, by dispersing mankind; which was done in an orderly manner, *every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations*^k. By this expression it appears, that families are parts of a nation, for the families were *in* their nations; and a nation is an offspring that containeth many families.

The nations, that is, the heads of nations or tribes, were sixteen, *viz.* seven of the descendants of Japhet^l, four of Ham^m, and five of Shemⁿ. The families were the descendants of each of these sixteen above mentioned. God so ordered them to speak with divers tongues, that their tongues also were ordered after their families, in their nations.

This, by the way, suggests a further thought, concerning the blacks being the offspring of Adam and Noah, as well as others, notwithstanding their different colour: for why might not God give to Ham and his posterity a different colour from the rest of Noah's children, to make some the more agreeable to such of their own likeness, when they were all to be scattered abroad; and so render them the more inclined to sort themselves in different companies, for the better peopling of the world, as well as to oblige them to it by the different languages, which he gave them for that purpose? And although the blacks generally differ from others, not only in colour, but in other respects, especially their hair and lips; yet that is no more an objection, than the variety of features, so remarkable in some particular families of the same country in Europe.

The Lesser Asia and Europe were planted by the seven descendants of Japhet: Syria, Armenia, Mesopotamia, As-

^l Which being the cause assigned by Moses, it seems needless to enquire after other motives. See Ainsworth and Patrick in loc. ^k As it is Gen. x. 5.

¹ Gen. x. 2.

^m Ver. 6.

ⁿ Ver. 22.

syria, Media, Persia, and India, by the five descendants of Shem: Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Canaan, and Arabia, by the four descendants of Ham°. But since the number of mankind was but comparatively small^p, it is not likely that they took the whole world into the first division or plantation, which doubtless was effected within a reasonable compass; the rest being planted by degrees from colonies of the respective nations.

Nimrod, of the posterity of Ham, being at first *a mighty hunter*, probably of wild beasts which were offensive, and thence growing expert in weapons, and having gotten a company, and being a man of a forward, ambitious, and violent temper, invaded part of the country of Shem, built Babel, or Babylon, and extended his conquest in Mesopotamia; and became the founder of the first or Assyrian monarchy^q.

CHAP. VI.

From God's covenant with Abraham, to the renewing of it with Isaac and Jacob.

Gen. xi. 10. to the end of that chapter,

WE have a particular account of that branch of Noah's family, from which Abraham sprung. One of Noah's sons (named Shem) had five sons, *viz.* Elam, Ashur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram; now whereas Abraham descended from Arphaxad, therefore Moses gives us so particular an account of that line in this chapter, because Abraham was that person from whom the Israelites descended, concerning whom it was Moses's principal purpose to write; forasmuch as the descendants of Abraham were, strictly speaking, the only church of God, that we know of, till Christ came into the world. There are indeed some other persons mentioned in Scripture as pious and religious; such as Melchisedec and Job, whom one of the ancients^r accounted to be as a prelude to the calling of the Gentiles, and to the admission of them to be the members of

° Mede, book i. disc. 49. Dr. Wells's first volume of the Old Testament, chap. 3.

^p About seven thousand, as hath been computed, from Gen. x.

^q Gen. x. 9.

^r St. Augustin, de Civ. Dei, lib. xviii. cap. 47.

the church of God, under the Messiah; but the posterity of Abraham, by his son Isaac, are represented as the peculiar people of God, and properly the ordinary members of his church.

It pleased God to choose one particular family; *first*, The better to preserve the pure religion. *Secondly*, That from thence the promised Seed, the Messiah, should come: hence that family was to be distinguished from all others, the better to preserve them from idolatry, and that it might appear more evidently whence the Messiah proceeded: and this is the people, whose history we have in the rest of the Old Testament. And therefore Moses, having declared in short the history of the creation, and the condition of mankind at the beginning; having also discoursed of the flood, and the family of Noah, who were preserved to replenish the earth; and also having reckoned up Noah's offspring, and especially as to what concerned Abraham; now he comes to treat more particularly of the Israelites, who descended from Abraham.

This sacred history begins the next chapter, Gen. xii. and so on; where we read, how God chose Abraham and his posterity to be his people: Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac had two sons, Esau and Jacob: this Jacob was the father of twelve sons, whose numerous posterity made up the people of Israel, afterwards called Israelites, and then Jews.

The holy Scripture gives us the history of these in order: *first*, of Abraham, the founder of the family; then of his son Isaac; and, *lastly*, of his grandson Jacob, with his posterity. So, first, ^b we have the history of Abraham, to whom God appeared in Mesopotamia, and made him a solemn promise, which he afterwards renewed, that he should have a numerous offspring, which God himself would particularly bless, and make great, and give the land of Canaan to, *from the river of Egypt, to the great river, the river Euphrates*^c; not that any more than the land of Canaan, properly so called, should be their possession^d, but that they should have dominion over the rest: so Solomon *reigned over all the kingdoms, from the river, unto*

^b Gen. xii. to xxv. 8.

^c As it is Gen. xv. 18.

^d Gen. xvii. 8.

the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt^e. And to prove Abraham's faith, God commanded him to get out from his kindred and father's house, (which had been infected with idolatry, from which he, with his family, was to be preserved^f;) and to leave his own country Mesopotamia, and go to Canaan, which was four hundred miles westward distant^g from him, as it were to take possession of it, in the behalf of his posterity. Abraham, on his part, was to *walk before God*^h, to go on to please him, and *be perfect*, or sincere and upright. It pleased God in making such a promise to Abraham, and entering into covenant with him, to condescend to the manner of men; who sometimes, in their more solemn covenantsⁱ, used to divide a beast sacrificed, and to pass between the parts of it; as much as if they had said, Let me be divided and cut in pieces, if I violate this covenant: in compliance with this custom, it is conjectured, that the divine Majesty, represented by a burning lamp, *passed between the pieces*, in making the covenant with Abraham^k.

Nor did God only promise Abraham thus far; but moreover, that in him *all families of the earth should be blessed*^l; or, as it is further, *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*, that is, that Abraham should be the spiritual father of all the families or members of God's church; and that God did enter into an everlasting covenant with them, in and by him; and to this purpose, that Christ, or Messiah, the Saviour of the world, (promised at the beginning, under the term of *the seed of the woman*ⁿ;) should, according to the flesh, proceed from his offspring: so that in that seed of his all nations should be blessed; the Jews, his natural children, and the Gentiles, his spiritual ones: and this is confirmed under the New Testament^o. And further, the covenant God

° 1 Kings iv. 21. f Josh. xxiv. 2. § Munster, in Gen. xxxv. 26. h Gen. xvii. 1. i Jer. xxxiv. 18. k Gen. xv. 9, 10, 17. See Jer. xxxiv. 8—20. A passage which describes ancient religious customs, and strikingly illustrates and supports the history of Abraham's covenant and sacrifice. See Mr. Mede, book ii. chap. 7. But others understand, that the burning lamp, passing between the pieces, consumed them, in token of God's acceptance. Chrysost. apud Patrick in loc. l Gen. xii. 3. m Gen. xxii. 18. n Gen. iii. 15. ° See Rom. iv. 11, &c. Gal. iii. 7, 8, 16, 17, 28, 29.

was pleased to enter into with Abraham and his posterity, *to be a God* unto him and them^p, imported in the spiritual sense, a promise of eternal life in heaven: for as ^q Christ proves the resurrection in general, ^r *I am the God of Abraham*, &c. so the Apostle explains it to mean a resurrection to life eternal; ^s *God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city*, that is in heaven, which accordingly *Abraham looked for*^t.

Thus was God pleased to enter into covenant with Abraham; and to confirm it, and support his hope therein, he changed his name from Abram, which signifies *high father*, to Abraham, which imports the *father of a multitude*; by adding one Hebrew letter, called *He*, (as our *H*,) being the first letter of the word *Hamon*, which in Hebrew signifies a multitude^u; for, says God, *A father of many nations have I made thee*^x: as also for the same reason *He* (or *H*) might be added to the name of *Sarai*, to make it *Sarah*^y. The sign, or token, and seal of this covenant was circumcision, according to God's appointment^z.

This circumcision was the cutting off the foreskin of the member, which is the instrument of generation, of every male that was the offspring of Abraham: in which part of the body, rather than any other, God might appoint the mark of his covenant to be made, that they might be denominated to be an *holy seed*, consecrated to him from the beginning: for since God covenanted with Abraham to multiply his seed, and to bless all the nations of the earth in him, it was meet that the seal of the covenant should be impressed on the very instrument of generation, that it might be suitable to the nature and intent of the covenant, and the better to renew the remembrance of it. Another secondary reason for circumcision, mentioned by one of the most judicious among the Jewish rabbies^a, is not unworthy our notice; and that is, its "being a common sign of unity among the posterity of Abraham, and of distinction from other people; so as they might be known

^p Gen. xvii. 7, 8. ^q Matt. xxii. 32. ^r Exod. iii. 6. ^s Heb. xi. 16.
^t Ver. 10. ^u Ainsworth in Gen. xvii. 5. ^x Gen. xvii. 5. ^y Gen. xvii. 15,
 16. ^z Gen. xvii. 9, &c. ^a Maimon. Mor. Nevoch. pars iii. c. 49.

to be such ; forasmuch as a slight marking of a limb might be imitated, and obliterated or healed up again ; but not such a one as this ; nor would any person comply with it, or with so painful a one, except on the score of faith and religion." This institution of circumcision afterwards was made part of Moses's law : upon which the Jews did always much value themselves, that they, of all nations, should have on their bodies the token or seal of the covenant, which God himself made with their forefathers ; so they accounted it their glorious and peculiar privilege, and the chief ground of their dependence on God's favour ; upon which they esteemed circumcision more than all the other rites and orders of the ceremonial law ; and the term *uncircumcised* was the highest reproach, as with us an heathen or infidel ^b. As for strangers admitted amongst them, (as proselytes, of which hereafter,) their males also were to be circumcised, and so they were accounted the adopted children of Abraham ^c.

This circumcision was to continue till Christ came, and then to cease ; because it was a sign or token of both the parts of the covenant God made with Abraham, *viz. first*, That the promised Seed, the Messiah, should (as man) proceed from his loins ; but when the covenant was made good, and Christ, the promised Seed, was come, there was no reason for the continuance of the sign of it. *Secondly*, Circumcision was also a sign of the other part of the covenant God made with Abraham, that he would be a God to him and his posterity, or they should be his peculiar church and people ; but in Christ, the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, were ^d to be members of God's church, (as hath been observed before ;) and the promise of this ^e was made before Abraham was circumcised, as the Apostle remarks^f. But the Jews, after Christ's appearance in the world, would not believe nor understand this, nor allow that any besides Abraham's seed, or unless they were circumcised, and made proselytes, should be

^b Judges xiv. 3. ^c Gen. xvii. 12, 13. Exod. xii. 48. ^d Sed etiam veteres Hebraei in ea fuerunt sententia, quod, tempore Messiae, circumcisio spiritualiter, non carnaliter amplius, fieri debet. P. Fagius in Deut. x. 16. ^e Gen. xii. 3. ^f Rom. iv. 9, &c.

in covenant with God ; and so were much prejudiced against the Apostles, for preaching down the ceremonial law, and more especially abolishing the sacrament of circumcision. The careful observation of this will render a great deal of the New Testament more easy to be understood, when we come to consider that part of the holy Bible.

Thus far we see God's kindness to Abraham, and the covenant made with him, and promise to him ; of which circumcision was made a token and seal.

Notwithstanding all this favour God shewed to Abraham, yet he had many afflictions, as we read in this history, and several trials of his faith in God, and obedience to his will ; for, besides his entire resignation to God, and firm dependence on him, when he called him out of his own country into Canaan, when he was seventy-five years old^g, he was forced to leave his abode by reason of a famine, and go to sojourn in Egypt ; where he was in danger of having his beloved wife Sarah taken from him^h. The instruction he gave his wife, to say that she was his sister, was no lie ; for she was so indeed, as being *the daughter of his father Terah*, (who had, it seems, two wives,) but *not the daughter of his own mother* ; and so his half sister by the father's sideⁱ ; and it was not esteemed unlawful among the Gentiles to intermarry in such case^k. Again, there were feuds and disquiets in his family, which obliged him to dismiss Ishmael, one of his sons^l. But the sorest affliction, and most severe trial, was when God commanded him^m to slay and sacrifice his only and beloved son Isaac, whom he had given to him in a miraculous manner, to be the heir of his great estate, and (which was infinitely more) the heir of the promise which God had made, to establish his covenant with this very son Isaac, *for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him*ⁿ ; and though he knew that God,

^g Gen. xii. 4.

^h Gen. xii. 10, &c. as again afterwards, Gen. xx. 2, &c.

ⁱ Gen. xx. 12.

^k Grotius in Gen. xx. 12. Others es eem her to have been the

daughter of Haran, Abraham's brother, and grand-daughter to Terah, and so the niece of Abraham ; it being usual with the Hebrews to call such near relations by the name of sister, and grand-child by the name of daughter. *Ainsworth.* ^l Gen.

xxi. 9, &c.

^m Gen. xxii. 2, &c.

ⁿ Gen. xvii. 19.

who, contrary to the usual course of nature, had blessed him with a son, was as able to raise him up even from the dead^o, which he believed, though there had been no example then of any such resurrection; yet this was such a trial, as might stagger the firmest resolution. Still he persisted in believing God, and discharging his duty; and God delivered him, and made good all his promises.

Here we may learn a religious behaviour, *viz.* to endeavour to entitle ourselves to God's favour, by doing our duty, and submitting to his will; and then relying on his gracious promises, which in their proper season, and in God's own way, shall at length be all accomplished.

Furthermore, from this history of Abraham's attempting to slay and sacrifice his son, we are not to conclude that a parent has an authority and power over the life of his child, or that Abraham was unnaturally cruel towards his; but that God, who is the sovereign Lord of all his creatures, may dispose of them as he pleases: and for that cause Abraham is justified in complying with the divine appointment. In the next place, we are here taught, that the prophets (and such were the ancient patriarchs) were fully assured of the truth of those things which God revealed or spake unto them; which they believed as strongly as things of sense: for if Abraham had in the least doubted whether this were the will of God, or no, he would never have consented to a thing which nature abhorred; nor, without the like assurance afterwards, have dismissed his son, on his hearing a voice, *Lay not thine hand upon the lad.* In like manner we learn, what assurance the patriarchs, as prophets, had of the truth and reality of what was revealed to them in the following history of Joseph, who was so convinced that God would bring up the Israelites, his brethren, out of Egypt, that *he took an oath of them*, to carry up his bones with them from thence^p.

Abraham also was a lively figure of the infinite love of God to mankind in Christ Jesus; for as Abraham, in obedience to the command, designed to slay and offer his only son; so God

^o Heb. xi. 19.

^p Gen. i. 24, 25.

the Father sent his only Son to be slain and sacrificed for us : and Isaac's carrying the wood on his own back, with which he was to be made a burnt-offering, was a figure of Christ, who bare his cross^q. And farther, as God promised Abraham, that in his seed all families of the earth should be blessed^r, that is, that the Messiah should proceed from him ; so *he rejoiced to see Christ's day, and he saw it, and was glad*^s. He saw it by the eye of faith, though afar off^t, and also in his son Isaac, who was a type or figure of him.

In Abraham's time two remarkable things occurred, not yet mentioned ; the first concerning his kinsman Lot, whom he had brought along with him, when he came out of Mesopotamia, and who, by reason of the increase of both their stocks of cattle, and the contention of their herdsmen, was parted from him, and abode near Sodom. It so happened, that some neighbouring princes at that time warred against the king of Sodom, took it, and also carried away Lot among the rest, and all his substance ; whom Abraham, with his family, servants, and other assistance, rescued ; and having taken some spoil from the enemy, he gave the tenth part or tithes thereof to Melchisedec, *priest of the living God*^v. Now this was long before the Jews were an established people, and therefore tithes cannot be said to be originally derived from them : besides, Jacob also vowed the tenth to God^w. And from Pagan writers we learn, that several nations, very far distant from each other, in different parts of the world, and, as it seems, without the least acquaintance or commerce one with another, observed this custom^x. Now since this proportion of one in ten is certainly indifferent in itself, and not to be determined by natural reason, any more than one in seven or eight, it is reasonable to believe, that this custom of paying tithe, like that of sacrificing, mentioned before, had some divine direction for it ; and that it was derived from Adam to Noah, and from him to his posterity ; till at length, at the dispersion at Babel, it spread over all the world.

^q John xix. 17. ^r Gen. xii. 3. ^s John viii. 56 ^t Heb. xi. 13. ^u Gen. xii. 5.
^v Gen. xiv. Heb. vii. 4. ^w Gen. xxviii. 20, &c. ^x Spencer de Leg. Hebr. lib. iii. cap. 10.

The other remarkable occurrence, in Abraham's time, was the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah: in the history whereof we may observe, in the first place, the justice and goodness of God, and the temper of a good man^y. The justice of God was shewn, in his raining down fire and brimstone upon the wretched and lewd inhabitants; his goodness, in being disposed to forgiveness, if only ten righteous men could have been found among them. And we have an instance of the temper of a good man in Abraham, who with so much pity and concern interceded for them, and that six times, one after another. Farther, in this history we read Lot's offer of his two daughters to the Sodomites^z; which offer, though not altogether excusable, no doubt proceeded from his real perplexity of mind, and desire of preserving his strangers, (the rights of hospitality being always accounted sacred,) and of preventing that more unnatural sin, which they would have committed with those of their own sex, thence called Sodomy.

And as for the daughters' contrivance afterwards, of making Lot their father drunk, and then lying with him^a, they appear not to have acted by the instigation of brutish lust, but on a desire to *preserve seed of their father*, or to prevent his family from being extinct; the first-born saying, *There is not a man in the earth to come in unto us, after the manner of all the earth*, as not knowing how far the fire from heaven, which had already destroyed the country where they had lived, did or would extend: so that their case was very singular, and their behaviour ought not to encourage the like practice in others. The last remark we may make on the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah is, that it hath pleased God a continued monument should be preserved of it, in the lake called Asphaltites, the Salt Sea, and Dead Sea, having no visible passage into the ocean; the water whereof is salt to the highest degree, and extremely bitter and nauseous, and bears up one's body in swimming with an uncommon force^b.

^y Gen. xviii. xix.
Journey, March 30.

^z Gen. xix. 8.

^a Gen. xix. 31.

^b Mr. Maundrel's

CHAP. VII.

From God's renewing of the covenant with Isaac and Jacob, to the giving of the Law.

TO proceed^a; we have next the history of Abraham's son, namely Isaac, the heir of his father, and of the blessings promised to him: God renews the same promise to Isaac, which he had made before to his father Abraham; and yet, as Abraham, so his son Isaac had his afflictions and troubles, in which he had the experience of God's providence and deliverances.

He was married to Rebecca, one of his father's kindred and country; by whom he had two sons, who were twins, Esau and Jacob: Esau and his posterity (called Edomites) dwelt on the south border of Canaan, *viz.* Idumæa: but God designed that the youngest, namely Jacob, should be inheritor of the promise; and so permits him to get the birthright from his eldest brother, and the blessing from his father.

^b Moses then gives us the history of this Jacob: as his father had blessed him, so God himself confirmed it, and renewed the promise to him, which before he had made to his grandfather Abraham, and his father Isaac; and accordingly afforded him sundry instances of his favour: one was, that of increasing his stock of cattle in a miraculous manner; for when the agreement was made with his father-in-law, that the *spotted cattle* should be his, and that sort *increased exceedingly*, it did not proceed from any unjust policy in Jacob, in setting *pilled rods* before his cattle^c, (that artifice would be now in vain contrived,) but from God's suggesting and succeeding that device, as appears from the angel's message to him in a dream^d.

We learn, in two instances, a religious method of obtaining favour and assistance of God, in our worldly concerns, from Jacob's practice: the first is, that solemn vow which he made to God, on his going a long journey to take a wife of his

^a Gen. xxv. 19, &c. ^b Gen. xxviii, &c. ^c Gen. xxx. 32, &c. ^d Gen. xxxi. 10, 11, 12.

father's kindred ; * *And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I go, and give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God ; (I will perform some special service to him ;) and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee,* to be employed in thy service^f. Jacob's other behaviour for the securing God's help, and the use he made of it, is an excellent pattern for us in our affairs^g. His case, in short, was thus : he had offended his elder brother Esau, in the procuring of the birth-right, though it was providentially effected by God ; and understood that his brother was coming against him with four hundred men : in this case, he first betakes himself unto prayer to God^h ; then he endeavours to pacify his angry brother with a presentⁱ : by this means having succeeded, and being again settled in safety, he *erected an altar, and called it El-elohe-Israel,* that is, God, the God of Israel^k. Hence we learn what is to be done in our necessities or occasions, *viz.* first to implore the favour and assistance of God's providence ; then not to neglect, but to set to our own endeavours ; and having succeeded, to ascribe the praise and glory to God.

Unto Jacob also was revealed the coming or manifestation of Christ, or the Messiah, above seventeen hundred years beforehand ; of whom he prophesied^l, that *the sceptre should not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come ; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.* Which prophecy is thus explained : by the *sceptre* is meant that of which a staff, rod, or sceptre was anciently a figure, *viz.* any power or majesty of government : of the same importance is a *lawgiver*, or ruling power : *between his feet*, that is, of his race and stock^m : *Shiloh* is the Messiah, or Christ, as the ancient Jews confess : by *Judah* is understood the body of the people, consisting of the Hebrews or Israelites in general, but chiefly of those of them called in after-ages

* Gen. xxviii. 20, &c. f Compare Deut. xxiii. 21. 1 Sam. i. 11. Psal. l. 14. and lxi. 5. Eccles. v. 4. Jonah i. 16. g Gen. xxxii. h Ver. 9, &c. i Ver. 13. k Gen. xxxiii. 20. l Gen. xlix. 10. m As the words signify, Deut. xxviii. 57.

Jews, from the patriarch Judahⁿ; so the meaning is, not that Judah, or the Jews, should have a king till the Messiah came, or should not cease to be a kingdom, strictly so called, but should not cease to be a state, a body politic, or commonwealth, having a power of government and jurisdiction within itself, though under different forms, and managed by persons of a different rank, until the Messiah came. Now, under the Romans, the Jewish state and commonwealth, with their city and temple, were utterly destroyed, which till then had continued united under some form of government from the beginning; and therefore before that, or in that age or generation, the Messiah was to appear, as he did. The sceptre or authority is attributed unto Judah, rather than to any other tribe, because the ten tribes carried away by the Assyrians never returned; but the tribe of Judah did return out of Babylon, with that of Benjamin, (which last was only an accession or addition to that of Judah;) so that the tribe of Judah had the blessing of the Patriarch, and the name and honour of the kingdom, commonwealth, and people, who are of the posterity of Jacob; for from this tribe of Judah (which probably the patriarch Jacob foresaw as a prophet, and for that cause mentioned it) the country was called Judæa, and the people Jews^o; who, even under the captivity, were a distinct body, and preserved a shew of government, having their chiefs or heads of the captivity, who are styled *rulers of the congregation*^p, and after the return the government was restored to them; so that during the captivity the sceptre was rather interrupted, as to its full extent, than departed from Judah: but an interruption or ceasing for a time is not the thing here spoken of, but a departing, the government wholly cut off and ceased, as it was under Titus the Roman emperor.

It is here to be observed, that before the coming of Christ, the ancient Jews and their interpreters understood this prophecy to be certainly meant of the Messiah, and of none

ⁿ Casaubon. Exerc. 1. Num. 3. Cunæus de Repub. Jud. lib. i. cap. 9. Mede, book i. disc. 8. Scil. ad mentem Justin. Martyris in Trypho. p. 152. edit. Jebb. London, 1719.

^o Josephus's Antiquities, book ii. chap. 5. near the end.

^p Ezra i. 5. and x. 14. Haggai i. 1.

other⁷: but since that time, they have forced themselves to put the most strained and contradictory meanings upon it⁷, to avoid this ancient and clear evidence of our Lord Jesus being the true Messiah or Christ: but the truth of this exposition is confirmed by the last words of the aforementioned prophecy; *and unto him shall the gathering of the people be*; for this is the same character by which he was declared to Abraham,⁸ *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*. He was signified also by this character in the prophets,⁹ *In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek*. And,¹⁰ *The mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and people shall flow unto it*⁸. In short, this prophecy began to be fulfilled when the Romans had brought the Jews under subjection; and in Christ's time the prophecy was still accomplished more and more, Judæa being reduced into the⁷ form of a province, (on the banishment of Archelaus,) and the Sanhedrim, or great council, having lost their judicial power of life and death; and at last, when Jerusalem was destroyed, the sceptre and lawgiver finally departed from them, then their commonwealth and church were destroyed together; and so this ancient prediction was completely fulfilled.

For the better understanding this history of the Patriarchs, we may observe, that the most constant abode of Abraham in Canaan, and of Isaac afterwards, was near Beersheba, in the utmost corner of Canaan southward^z, and sometimes they abode near Hebron, a little higher in the country. And as for Jacob, he was sent by his father Isaac into Charan, (called also Haran, or Aram,) in the country of Padan-Aram, in Mesopotamia, whence Abraham came, above four hundred miles distant from Beersheba in Canaan^a, to fetch him a wife of his own kindred, who lived in that country, that he might

⁷ P. Fagius et Grot. in Gen. xlix. 10. Mede, *ibid.* ⁸ Vide Pool's Synopsis in Gen. xlix. 10. ⁹ Gen. xxvi. 4. ¹⁰ Isa. xi. 10. ¹¹ Micah iv. 1. ¹² See the fourth general Remark on the Prophets. ¹³ Josephus, Wars, book ii. chap. 7. at the beginning. ¹⁴ Gen. xxi. 31. xxiv. 62. xxvi. 33. ¹⁵ Munster in Gen. xxxv. 26.

not marry any of the idolatrous Canaanites; and after twenty years' stay at his father-in-law Laban's house, he returned with his family and numerous cattle into Canaan, where also he sojourned in tents in divers places^b, as Abraham and Isaac had done before him, until his old age, when he was removed into Egypt.

Thus, though God promised the land of Canaan to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob's seed, yet, as the Apostle observes^c, they dwelt therein themselves in tabernacles, as strangers only, by faith relying on it, that God would make good his promise, as he did afterwards; to which purpose he blessed Jacob with twelve sons, whose numerous offspring made up the children of Israel, and possessed the land of Canaan.

These people were called Hebrews, according to the most received opinion, from Heber^d, one of the ancestors of Abraham; and Israelites, or the children of Israel, from Jacob, who was also named by God himself Israel, that is, as a *prince prevailing with God*, from the combat mentioned Gen. xxxii. 28, 29. And after the return from the Babylonian captivity, they were called Jews, and their country Judæa, (as it hath been already remarked,) from Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob; and because the tribe of Judah was the largest, and which returned from the captivity, whereas the ten tribes never did.

Gen. xxxvii. &c. we have a relation of this people, especially in these following particulars; namely, the preservation of Joseph, one of the sons of Jacob, from the design of his brethren to destroy him, and his advancement in Egypt; how God brought it to pass, in the time of a famine, that Jacob and his family were succoured by Joseph's means under Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and afterwards concerning their posterity's being oppressed there by another king, called also Pharaoh, (as all the^e Egyptian kings were then called;) how

^b Gen. xxxiii. and xxxv. ^c Heb. xi. 9. ^d Hottinger. Thesaurus, lib. i. c. i. §. 2. p. 5. ^e Hor. in Gen. xii. 15. the king of Egypt is called Pharaoh; and chap. xli. 1. he is so called two hundred years after; and Exod. i. 8, 11. about a hundred and forty years after that.

miraculously Moses was preserved by the means of Pharaoh's daughter; how God appeared to him, when grown up, by the shechinah, or glory, before mentioned, in the likeness of flame, in a bush in mount Horeb; and appointed him (together with Aaron his brother) the deliverer of the Israelites; how many signs God wrought by him for their deliverance, and what plagues were brought upon the Egyptians, their oppressors; how they were at length (after fourscore and six years' slavery) delivered, and passed over the Red sea^f; what befel them afterwards in the wilderness; and, at last, how they were brought into the land of Canaan, which God had promised Abraham. This history takes up the rest of Genesis, and most part of Exodus and Joshua.

Here we have many instances of the provocation of sin, of the calamities of God's people in this life, of God's truth in fulfilling his promises, of his wisdom, power, and providence in protecting his servants, and destroying the designs of their enemies, and bringing to pass what he had determined.

In particular, who can read the history of Joseph's preservation and protection in Egypt^g, in order to the succouring his father and brethren in a time of famine, without adoring the wisdom, goodness, and providence of God? That Joseph should be hated, and sold by his brethren to merchants, who were travelling into Egypt, (as it was and is still the custom in the east to buy and sell slaves:) that these merchants should dispose of him not to a private person, but to a great officer in the king's court there, (which was the occasion of his future authority:) that he should be preferred, and yet after that cast into prison, and so (to all outward appearance) rendered incapable of any future eminency: that he should there interpret his fellow-prisoners' the chief baker's and butler's dreams in such a manner as it came to pass; upon which he should be recommended to Pharaoh for interpreting

^f See Heylin and Dr. Wells's Geogr. of the Old Test. vol. ii. ch. ii. §. 2. It is not called so for any redness of either water or weeds, &c. but because anciently stiled the Sea of Edom, (as being partly on the coast of Edom;) the Greeks, knowing that Edom signifies *Red*, by mistake called it the Erythrean or Red sea.
^g Gen. xxxvii, &c.

his dream, and by him advanced, and made ruler over all the kingdom, and so enabled to entertain his father and brethren, with their families, and to preserve them from perishing.

Concerning Jacob's settlement with his family in the land of Goshen, in Egypt, it is said, that Joseph contrived they should be there apart by themselves, because *every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians*^h, and yet Pharaoh had flocks of cattle, and *rulers over them*ⁱ; of which this account is given: that the great courtiers and generality of the Egyptians lived in towns and cities, and the common people mostly exercised arts and trades; but there was another sort, who lived more remote in open places, and were shepherds, and, for the diversity of their employments, contemned and disrespected by the former sort: besides, that those shepherds had often, in a tumultuous manner, occasioned great commotions in the kingdom, which made their very employment odious to the rest^k.

In the next place, the providence of God appears in the sufferings of Jacob's posterity afterwards in Egypt: when they had been succoured there an hundred and twenty years, they suffered very sore affliction and slavery, which is computed to have continued fourscore and six years, *viz.* from the time that *there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph*^l, either as being born after Joseph's death, or who willingly slighted the service that Joseph had done for that nation, on a political account; for the reason the Egyptians gave for their severity to the Israelites was, because they multiplied so much as to become *more and mightier* than the Egyptians themselves^m. The danger that might arise from thence was designed to be prevented by hard usage, in employing the Israelites in *buildings, in making bricks, and in all manner of service in the field*ⁿ; for which purpose they had task-masters, who were Egyptians, set over them^o, and also officers directed by the task-masters, which officers ap-

^h Gen. xlvi. 34. ⁱ Gen. xlvii. 6. ^k Cunaus de Rep. Hebr. lib. i. cap. 5.
Compare Grotius and Patrick on Gen. xlvi. ult. ^l Exod. i. 8. ^m Ver. 9.
ⁿ Josephus (Antiq. book ii. chap. 9.) mentions draining of rivers, walling towns, and erecting pyramids. ^o Exod. v. 6.

pear to be of the Israelites themselves^p. Another method to prevent any danger from the Israelites was, to destroy their new-born male children^q. All this, it is probable, God suffered to be done, not only for the chastisement of his people, but also that they might be the more willing to leave Egypt, as they would not have been after a long enjoyment of ease and prosperity, and the more in love with their Deliverer, the more admire his goodness to them, and his power shewn in the miraculous works he wrought for their sakes, and the more engaged to his service. Further, God's providence is shewn in the preservation of Moses, when an infant, being put into a little ark, and hid among the flags by the river's brink, lest he should be killed among the rest, and also in making the king's daughter the instrument of preserving him, and his own mother to be chosen for his nurse^r.

Again, the wisdom, power, and providence of God is very observable in the manner of effecting the deliverance of the Israelites from the Egyptian slavery, insomuch, that they were at length entreated and urged to be gone in haste, with their families and cattle, and with great treasures also of the Egyptians themselves^s; so that Egypt *was glad when they departed*^t.

In order to secure and hasten their deliverance, God slew the firstborn of the Egyptians, and passed over the doors of the Israelites^u; therefore the firstborn males of the children of Israel were ever afterwards sanctified to God, or set apart unto him^v; instead of whom God accepted of the tribe of Levi, and ordered them to be separated to his service^w; and the firstborn were to be redeemed for five shekels, or about twelve shillings and sixpence of our money^x. Hence our Lord was presented in the temple to be redeemed, according to the law^y.

^p Ver. 14, 15. ^q Exod. i. 14, 15, &c. Josephus adds one particular reason for the command to destroy the Hebrew male children, because a certain prophet had told the king, that there was an Hebrew child to be born about that time, who would be a scourge to the Egyptians, and advance the glory of his own nation. Ant. b. ii. c. 9. ^r Exod. ii. 1, &c. ^s Exod. xii. ^t Psal. cv. 38. ^u Exod. xii. 29. ^v Exod. xiii. 2. ^w Numb. iii. 12, 13. ^x Numb. xviii. 16. ^y Luke ii.

This sanctifying or separating to God of the firstborn, was appointed as a standing memorial of that great work of his, in compelling Pharaoh to let the Israelites go, by slaying his and his people's firstborn^b; and because not the firstborn of the Egyptians only, but also of their cattle, were slain in the night, when God delivered the Israelites^c; therefore the firstborn not of man only, but of beasts too, were separated to God, the clean beasts for sacrifice, the unclean to be redeemed^d.

As for the hardening Pharaoh's heart, when he should have dismissed the Israelites^e, (*I will harden his heart*, says God to Moses,) we are not to understand it as if God did at first harden his heart, so that he was under a necessity of continuing obstinate to his ruin; rather, on the contrary, that he obstinately hardened his own heart, as God foretold he would^f, against the many plagues and miracles wrought for his conviction; and even after the magicians themselves had confessed concerning the plague of lice, *This is the finger of God, yet he hardened his heart*^g. Again^h, after the swarms of flies were removed, it is said, *and Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also*: so that after he had continued obstinate under so many severe judgments and threatenings, then at length God dealt with him in justice, *And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them, as the Lord had spoken unto Moses*, (or as God had foreseen and foretold to Moses.) Since he had hardened himself so long, God now leaves him to himself, and all things are so ordered, that he might continue in his hardness to his destruction; so that the words^k, *but I will harden his heart*, are to be understood, *I will slay thy firstborn*, which was not executed upon Pharaoh's first refusal, but after a long course of other judgments. *Lastly*, the words, ^m *he hardened Pharaoh's heart* should have been, according to the Hebrew, *Pharaoh's heart became firm, or was hardened*ⁿ, as the same

^b Exod. xiii. 14, 15.^c Exod. xii. 29.^d Numb. xviii. 15, &c.^e Exod. iv. 21.^f Exod. iii. 19.^g Exod. viii. 15, 19.^h Ver. 32.ⁱ Exod. ix. 12.^k Exod. iv. 21.^l As ver. 23.^m Exod. vii. 13.ⁿ And so the Hebrew phrase is rendered by Ar. Montanus, *et reboravit se cor*

words which are in the Hebrew are afterwards translated^o. Nor is there in this last passage, or the context, any person mentioned who hardened his heart.

It hath been observed before, (in answer to the question, Why we believe the Scriptures to be the word of God?) that although the magicians could imitate Moses in some of the wonders which he wrought, yet his works were evidently superior to theirs, and that their power was so restrained by that power by which Moses wrought, that at length their enchantments could prevail no more, and therefore they were forced to submit and acknowledge *the finger of God*, or the effect of his power^p.

There is another circumstance in this history not to be omitted, namely, the Israelites borrowing jewels of silver, and gold, and raiment, and spoiling the Egyptians, which was no injustice; for what they did herein was *according to the word of Moses*, or as an appointment from God^q, who hath a supreme right to all things^r, and might justly transfer the right of the Egyptians unto the Israelites, as some recompence for their slavery and labours for so many years, and as a punishment for the tyranny and inhumanity of the Egyptians; (so the reason is given, *Ye shall spoil the Egyptians*;) who also at length seemed willing to purchase their own safety with the loss of their goods; for it is said, *The Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them off the land in haste; for they said, We be all dead men.* Further, ^u it is said, that *a mixed multitude went up also with them*, or, as in the Hebrew, *a great mixture*: it is not mentioned what they were, whether some of the Egyptians who married the Israelites, or rather proselytes to the religion and worship of the true God^v.

Parhoh, and by the Seventy, *και κατασχυσεν η καρδια Φαραω* and by the Vulg. Lat. *induratumque est cor Pharaonis*, which is according to the Chaldee. ^o Exod. iv. 22. ^p Exod. viii. 18, 19. and ix. 11. ^q Exod. xi. 2. and xii. 35, 36. ^r Ipse Deus jus dominii plenissimum habet, ut in res nostras, ita et in vitam nostram, ut munus suum, quod sine ulla causa, et quovis tempore, auferre cuivis, quando vult, potest. *Grot. de Jur. Belli*, lib. ii. cap. 21. §. 14. ^s Exod. iii. 22. ^t Exod. xii. 33. ^u Exod. xii. 38. ^v Chaldee, *Extranei quoque multi*.

Note here, that although God had promised Abraham that his seed or posterity should enjoy the land of Canaan, yet withal he had told him^y, that it should not be till after the expiration of *four hundred years*, when the sins of the Amorites would be full; but till then, those people must have mercy shewn them; and besides, there was time to be given to the Israelites to multiply, that so they might be able to till the land, which was designed them, and to be for a while under the discipline of affliction in Egypt, that they might set the greater value on their redemption and their settlement in Canaan; but when the set time was accomplished, they were to be put in possession of the promised land: and so it came to pass; for, according to the best computation^z, from Abraham's receiving the promise to Jacob's going down into Egypt, it was two hundred and fifteen years, and the whole abode of the children of Israel in Egypt was two hundred and fifteen years more; so that from God's covenant with Abraham, and his first coming into Canaan, to the Israelites' going out of Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years; all which time they were strangers and sojourners, first in Canaan, and afterwards in Egypt^a. Probably Egypt is mentioned, and not Canaan, in the place last cited, because their greatest affliction and hardship was in Egypt, and their sojourning there was later than the other^b.

When the time came for the children of Israel to go, and take possession of the promised land, God did not lead them the common way to Canaan, by the Philistines' country, which from Egypt was not above ten days' journey^c; but brought them round by the wilderness, wherein they wandered

^y Gen. xv. 13.

^z See P. Fagius in Exod. xii. 40. and Dr. Hammond in

Acts vii. 4.

^a Exod. xii. 40.

^b Compare P'sal. cv. 9—14. The land

of Canaan, in the Samaritan Pentateuch, is mentioned as well as Egypt, (which the Seventy follow,) as Grotius observes; yet that ought not to lessen the authority of the Hebrew text, chiefly because the Chaldee Paraphrase, the vulgar Latin, the Arabic, and other approved versions, agree with the Hebrew; and the most ancient Jewish as well as Christian commentators explain this passage according to the Hebrew text. Vide Hottinger. Thesaurus, lib. i. cap. 2. quæst. 4. p. 148.

^c P. Fagius in Exod. xiii. 17.

backward and forward for the space of forty years: one reason of which is given^d, to *humble* them, (with the tedious wanderings,) and to *prove* them, (whether they would become better,) and to *know what was in their heart*; which indeed God knew perfectly before; but here, according to the first general rule for interpreting of the holy Scripture^e, the Scripture speaks *after the manner of men*, as we often know upon making trial: besides, the people, so long used to slavery, and having no warlike dispositions, might be terrified by a sudden war with the Canaanites: not but that God could have raised their courage, or could have made the Philistines favour them, (as the Egyptians did at first;) but he observed the rule of his ordinary providence, and designing they should overcome the Canaanites, he would have them, as it were, inured and trained for some time. This second reason of their not being led by God the nearest way from Egypt, is set down^f, *lest peradventure the people repent when they see war*.

It is further observable, that in their journeying in the wilderness, God led them by a pillar, which stood still when they were to rest, and moved forward when and which way they were to march. This pillar appeared as a cloud in the day, keeping off the scorching heat of the sun; and as a fire by night, to give light; whereby it was manifest the Divine Presence was always with them; for this pillar of a cloud and fire was doubtless the same with the shechinah^g, or the glory of the Lord before mentioned, and that which was upon the tabernacle, *a cloud by day, and the appearance of fire by night*^h. It appears that sometimes the cloud tarried upon the tabernacle a considerable time in the same place, as a month, or a yearⁱ. In some places they abode several years; for in thirteen years' space there are reckoned but seventeen encampings^k.

^d Deut. viii. 2.

^e Mentioned before, chap. i. sect. 19.

^f Exod. xiii. 17.

^g See the fifth general Remark on the Pentateuch.

^h Exod. xiii. 21, 22. and

xiv. 24. and xl. 36, 37, 38. Numb. ix. 15, to the end. Psal. cv. 39.

ⁱ Numb. ix.

22.

^k So Bishop Usher computes, Annal. A.M. 2515.

As for their clothes, they were miraculously preserved from decaying, and wore not out in forty years^m; and the clothes of children, as they grew up, might be kept for other succeeding children; so also the clothes of those who died might serve their children when they grew up to their stature. Their food was chiefly *man*, or *manna*ⁿ, which God gave them from heaven^o. There is indeed a sort of manna now gathered in Calabria in Italy; but this sweats out of the branches and leaves of the ash tree, and is thickened and hardened by the heat of the sun^p, and has none of the qualities of the Israelites' miraculous manna; as to fall on the ground, to be like coriander-seed, and to taste like wafers made with honey. Further, because they journeyed in a dry wilderness, God miraculously provided water for them, which Moses struck out of a rock^q, and which seems to have continued flowing like a stream or river, and following them from place to place along the wilderness^r, till the last year of their travelling, when water again failing, it was renewed after the same manner as before^s.

Here, by the way, we may take notice, that the whole people of Israel, and that which befel them, were types or figures of Christ and his church, as we learn from the Apostle^t. Their redemption from Egypt was a type of our redemption from sin; the barren wilderness, through which they passed, of the afflictions of this life; Moses, their captain, of Christ; Canaan, of heaven; the Red Sea, of baptism; manna, of the bread which Christ brought down from heaven, his doctrine of salvation, which nourishes to eternal life, &c.

^m Dent. viii. 4. ⁿ Most probably from *manah*, (*unde minnah in Piel. Dan. i. 10.*) which signifies to appoint or order a distinct share or portion. Hence *præparatus cibus* for manna, in *Wisd. xvi. 20.* Buxtorf. et Paquin apud Robertson. *Thesaur. Lingvæ sanctæ.* ^o Exod. xvi. 33. ^p Raii Hist. Plantarum in Fraxino. ^q Exod. xvii. 1, &c. ^r Psal. lxxviii. 16, 20. 1 Cor. x. 4.

^s Numb. xx. 2—13. ^t 1 Cor. x. at the beginning.

CHAP. VIII.

The Laws which God ordained at Mount Sinai, and particularly the moral Laws.

WHEN the Israelites were on their journey towards the land of Canaan, and, in the first day of the third month after their setting out^a, were got as far as mount Sinai, (called also Horeb^b, either because Horeb is an adjoining mountain to Sinai, or that they are only two different risings of the same mountain,) in the wilderness or desert of Arabia Petraea, there God instructed Moses, who was their leader, in the several laws which he had ordained for them to keep. The Jewish rabbies observe, *The Lord spake unto Moses face to face*^c; that it was not as to other prophets in dreams and visions, &c. but in such a clear and plain manner as one person may converse with another^d.

Here, before we proceed, we cannot but observe the sad effects of worshipping idols; for when Moses went up to the mount to receive the laws of God, and stayed there forty days, the people (that is, a great part of them) thinking he was lost, and observing the pillar, or cloud, which was wont to conduct them, not to move forward as before, contrived to make some symbol or representation of God's presence to *go before them*^e, or that might represent God in a visible manner to them; to which purpose they set up a molten calf, and brought their offerings to it^f. The reason of this shape might be, because it was such as they had seen in Egypt, (golden bulls being a symbol of the Egyptian god Osiris, which was also called Apis, whom the Egyptians worshipped in the image of a bull; and sometimes they represented him by a live bull, which was kept in the temple of Osiris^g. In imitation of which, Jeroboam afterwards set up golden calves in Dan and Bethel.) Now it

^a Exod. xix. 1. ^b Deut. iv. 10. Mr. Sandys says, that Sinai hath three tops of a marvellous height; that on the west side of old called mount Horeb, where God appeared to Moses in a bush; being fruitful in pasturage, far lower, and shadowed, when the sun arises, by the middlemost. *Travels*, book ii. p. 123. edit. London, 1615. ^c Exod. xxxiii. 11. ^d Maimon. *Porta Mosis* p. 169. ^e Exod. xxxii. ^f See Bishop Stillingfleet of *Idolatry*, chap. i. §. 10. ^g As appears from their ancient historians; Herodotus, lib. ii. and Diodor. lib. i. apud Dr. Prideaux's *Connection*, part i. book iii. an. 524.

does not appear that they had any intention to cast off that God who had *brought them out of the land of Egypt*^h, but that something in the place of God, or representing God, might stand before them: for Aaron proclaimed *a feast to the Lord (Jehovah*ⁱ), and the calf most likely was designed a symbol or sign of his presence; yet God conceived such indignation against the idol-worshippers, that upon his command, three thousand of them were slain by those who clave to the worship of the true God^k. Whence it appears, that not only setting up an idol for the true God, but also worshipping the true God by an image, is idolatry: the reason is, because the representing God by an idol is a debasing of him, as if he were a corporeal being like ourselves; and therefore the Israelites are said to have *changed the glory of God into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass*^l.

To proceed: The laws which God ordained in mount Sinai were of three sorts, *viz.* moral, ceremonial, and judicial, or political. The first or moral laws their rabbies call *precepts*; the ceremonial by the name of *statutes*; and the judicial they term *judgments*^m. First, *moral*, so called to distinguish them from such laws, which are to be observed merely because they are ordained, and are called positive, or ceremonial: but now the moral laws are such as are founded on the nature of things, and enjoined, because they are good in themselves, and arise from eternal reason, and are suitable to our frame and condition in the world; as that God, who made and preserves us and all the world, should be adored and worshipped by us, and no idol or spirit should partake of his honour; that it must be a high affront to declare a thing in his name, or to appeal to him as a witness in vain, or falsely; that some time be allotted for God's honour and worship; that parents and governors be honoured and respected; that one man should not injure another, in his person by murder, or his wife by adultery, in his goods by stealing, or his reputation by slander and false witness; neither should men covet what is the property of another.

^h Exod. xxxii. 4. ⁱ Ver. 5. ^k Exod. xxxii. ^l Psal. cvi. 20. compare Rom. i. 23. ^m Hottinger. Thesaurus, lib. ii. cap. iii. §. 2.

These moral laws are summed up in the Ten Commandments, which *God spake*ⁿ or published from the mount^o, after a very solemn manner, with a long train of terror and magnificence, as thunderings and lightnings, the shaking and smoking of the mountains, and the sounding of a trumpet^p, to shew the majesty and power of the divine Lawgiver, and to create the greater veneration for his laws^q.

Afterwards these laws, *written with the finger of God himself* (that is, by his own powerful operation, without employing of Moses, or any other therein) on two tables of stone, were delivered by him unto Moses^r. Here a question may arise: since the moral law and the law of nature appear in the main to be the same, what occasion was there for the solemn declaring of what by the light of nature might be known before? In answer hereto, we are to remember what has been before observed, *viz.* that, since the fall of Adam, our affections and faculties are depraved, and our understanding is so darkened, that the knowledge of the natural law hath been much obscured; so that God was pleased, out of his

ⁿ There is some variety of expressing the publishing of the law, especially these moral ones, the Ten Commandments. In Exod. xx. 1. it is, *And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, &c.* and Deut. iv. 12. *The Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire.* But in Acts vii. 38. St. Stephen tells the Jews, *This is he (Moses) that was in the church in the wilderness, with the angel, which spake to him in the mount Sinai, and with our fathers; who received the oracles to give unto us.* And verse 53. that their fathers *received the law by the disposition, $\epsilon\varsigma$ διαταγας*, the ordering or ministration, of angels. And St. Paul, Gal. iii. 19. says, *it was ordained by angels in the hands of (Moses) a mediator (between God and them, Deut. v. 5.)* And Heb. ii. 2, 3. he makes a comparison between God's speaking the law to the Jews by angels, and his speaking to us by his Son: *If the word spoken by angels was stedfast—how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord?* So that either we must understand, first, that God himself, in a strict sense, spake the words, which because they came from the Shechinah, or the divine glory, that was encompassed with the host of angels, are therefore said to be *spoken by angels*. Or, secondly, that one principal angel formed the voice, with the attendance of many others: which, because it was done by the immediate special command of the Divine Majesty, appearing in the Shechinah, is therefore said to be spoken by God himself, or the Logos. See Grotius and Dr. Whitby on Heb. ii. 2. who quote Josephus for this sense last mentioned, (*Antiq. Gr. lib. xv. cap. 5.* in the translation, chap. 8.) But Bishop Patrick on Exodus xx. 1. approves of the sense first given. ^o Exod. xx. 1. ^p Exod. xix. 14. to the end. ^q Exod. xx. 20. ^r Exod. xxxi. 18. Deut. ix. 10.

great wisdom and goodness, to renew the impression of the general law of nature, and confirm and particularly explain the same by a new revelation.

It is plain, that in the Ten Commandments, God had a particular respect to the Jews, and their state; because he represents himself in a particular manner as their God, and as expecting their obedience, in gratitude for what he had done for them in Egypt; *I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, &c.* yet they are of a moral obligation to all mankind in some respect or other, and are enforced as such by our Lord and his Apostles: and as the preface to the Commandments, *I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, &c.* belonged strictly to the Jews, and their deliverance from their slavery in Egypt; so, in another sense, to all mankind, he is the Lord our God, who made and preserves us, especially to us Christians, who by the Gospel are delivered from the thralldom under the Devil and sin.

The two first Commandments forbid idolatry, with some difference. In the first is forbidden the owning any other God except the true God: now to own or to have any other God, is to ascribe supreme authority, power, and goodness to a false God, as the old heathens did, either to the sun, moon, or stars, or any spirits or creature whatever; and to behave ourselves accordingly, by worshipping or praying to such a false God, as if he knew, and heard, and saw all things.

By the second Commandment is forbidden another sort of idolatry, that is, the representing the true and almighty God by an image or idol; and the worshipping such an image: which would be a great diminishing to his glory, and whence would proceed mean thoughts of God, while he is represented as a creature, and a being like ourselves*. Whence it was that he expostulated with the Jews, *'To whom will ye liken me and compare me, that we may be like'?* Such probably was the idolatry of Aaron's calf in the wilderness, as hath been said, and the two calves set up by Jeroboam, of which afterwards. With such idolatry the Church of Rome is justly charged.

It is here to be observed, that by the laws given to the

* Rom. i. 23.

† Isa. xlvi. 5.

‡ See also Acts xvii. 29.

Israelites, God, in the first place, guarded them against idolatry: for he chose them as a peculiar people, by whom the worship of the one supreme God might be preserved in the world, which was overrun with idolatry; and men were to learn of them, from their examples, rewards, and punishments, the knowledge and worship of the one supreme God. To the same purpose it is farther observable, that God never suffered the Israelites' idolatry for any long time to go unpunished.

In the second Commandment, God threatens to *visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him*^x; and yet he afterwards promised, that the children should not be punished for their fathers' sins^y. And how doth the contrary seem just? Here we are to observe, *first*, that the iniquity and visitation mentioned in the Commandment are both national, and chiefly respected the Jews; and the threatening is confined strictly to the sin of idolatry, which is here called *hating* God, and which is of the nature of high treason with us, for which the father and his posterity forfeit their estate: so the Israelites, for their idolatry and disobedience, forfeiting their inheritance in the land which God had given them, on condition of their obedience, their posterity (who also trod in the steps of their forefathers, even to the third and fourth generations) lost their possessions, and were made captives in a strange land. In this sense, the threatening of visiting the iniquity of their fathers upon the children is explained^z; *They that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' land; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them*^a. But afterwards, God, in compassion to his people, sent his prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel, as in the places before mentioned, to comfort them, that he would not still use that severity; but they should return into their own land, and for the future have no more occasion to use the proverb^b, *The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge*; that is, the fathers sinned, and were idolaters, and their children suffer in captivity; but every one should answer for

^x Compare 2 Kings xxiii. 26.
39. ^a Compare Lam. v. 7.

^y Jer. xxxi. 29, 30. Ezek. xviii.
^b Ezek. xviii. 2.

^z Levit. xxvi.

his own sin only : but even this was upon condition of their continuance in repentance and reformation ; for when they did afterwards again revolt, the iniquities of their forefathers were again avenged upon them, in their dreadful and final destruction^c; *Fill ye up the measure of your fathers, that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, &c.* *Secondly*, When God visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, or punishes the children for their fathers' faults, it is not by spiritual and eternal, but only temporal punishments, whereby their parents are punished in them, they being a part of their parents : and God hath a full power and dominion^d, as over all our possessions, so over our lives, as being his gift, which he may take from us as he pleases. Farther, if such children have imitated their fathers' vices, then they deserve punishment for their own sins too ; as the Jews in our Saviour's time filled up the measure of their fathers ; but if such suffering children should be pious, their punishment would be to them a fatherly chastisement for their good, and as a medicine to heal and save their souls : and God will recompense all their sufferings with the eternal joys of heaven. *Lastly*, It is to be observed, that whereas the punishment is threatened to extend only to the third and fourth generation ; on the other hand, the mercy and blessings promised to obedience are without limitation, God *shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love him.*

As for the sabbath day, and the strict rest enjoined in the fourth Commandment^e, we are to distinguish between that which is moral, and that which is ceremonial. Some time ought to be set apart for the glory and service of God, our Creator and Preserver ; and there should be such a cessation from labour, as may give leisure for that service : this is what appears to be moral in the Commandment. Next we are to consider what is positive, or ceremonial.

^c Matt. xxiii. 32, 36. ^d Thus God punished David's sin, by the destruction of his people with a pestilence, 2 Sam. xxiv. whom David supposed guiltless, ver. 17. Sed Deus qui in vitam ipsorum jus habet plenissimum. Grot. de Jur. B. et P. lib. ii. cap. xxi. §. 14, 18. ^e Mede, b. i. disc. 15. Grot. in Mandatum 4. Exod. xx. 8. Bishop Patrick in Gen. ii. 3.

God had sanctified, that is, separated to an holy use, at the beginning, a seventh or sabbath day, that men should solemnly acknowledge and worship him, the only God and Creator of heaven and earth, who made all the creatures in six days, and ceased from his work of the creation on the seventh; and therefore ordained this suitable distribution of their time, as a badge and livery, that their religious service was appropriated to him alone ^f; whereby God took care both to preserve the memory of the creation of the world in the minds of mankind, and also the worship of him, the only God, by whom it was created ^g. And we may not doubt, but for some time after the creation, this sabbath (as well as sacrificing) was observed, and possibly all along by the patriarchs, however not recorded, (so neither is David's observance thereof mentioned in his history, nor that of the other kings of Judah or Israel.) And supposing the observation thereof by them, there appears no more occasion for Moses to mention it particularly, in the several accounts he gives of them and their affairs, than there was that they took their natural repose each night. But afterwards it came to be neglected by the generality of mankind, idolatry prevailing in the world: and it might be intermitted by the Israelites during the Egyptian bondage; but now the children of Israel having passed over the Red Sea, and so being delivered from the bondage in Egypt, and fed by God with manna, the institution of the sabbath was renewed ^h; *This is that which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord*: by which words it seems that the sabbath was no new thing, as to religious offices, but that the strict ceremonial resting on the sabbath was now added and

^f Which, when duly considered, does not appear to be done by anticipation. See the forementioned authors. And it seems unlikely, that Moses should mention God's sanctifying a day, to secure the worship of the true God, which was not to be observed till 2500 years afterwards. See Gen. ii. 23.

^g Assentientibus Hebræorum doctissimis, duplex est præceptum de Sabbato; præceptum recordandi, Exod. xx. 8. et præceptum observandi, Exod. xxxi. 13, &c. Distinctio est Mosis Gerundensis, et Isaaci Aramæ. Præceptum recordandi impletur religiosa memoria mundi conditi. Præceptum observandi situm in exacta abstinentia ab omni opere. Illud ad genus humanum pertinet, hoc ad Hebræos solos. Grot. de Ver. R. Christ. l. v. §. 10. et in Exod. xx. 8.

^h Exod. xvi. 23.

enjoined¹; for they were henceforward to observe it *unto the Lord*, not only now as Maker of heaven and earth, but also as being in covenant with them, and their Deliverer from their slavery in Egypt: and therefore he requires a strict ceremonial rest of them, as a memorial of their rest from that slavery^k: and, at the same time, such an observation of the sabbath, with a resting thereon, was miraculously confirmed, by the manna's being given for six days, and not on the seventh; and by its not stinking, nor breeding worms, as that did which was kept for any other day but the seventh.

But as for us Christians, though we are not obliged to a Jewish ceremonial rest, which they were in memory of their rest from their bondage, we are to observe a seventh day, or one day in seven, as it was at first sanctified^l, that is, whereon to worship and glorify the true God, the Maker of heaven and earth; otherwise we should seem to deny God the Creator of the world; the sabbath being a sign that we, as well as the Jews, ^m are worshippers of him who made all things, and rested on the sabbath day. This interpretation is farther strengthened, by observing, that in the fourth Commandment, what was peculiar to the Jews is left out, *viz.* their deliverance from the Egyptian bondageⁿ, and a reference is made only to the ^o creation. Against this interpretation it is objected, How comes the day to be changed? Why do we not observe the same sabbath day which was at first sanctified, wherein God finished the works of his creation? In answer hereto we are to take notice, that whether this sabbath day in the commandment were in order the seventh from the creation, or not, the Scripture is silent. The example of the creation is brought for the *quotum*, *viz.* one day of seven, or the seventh day, after six days of labour; not for

¹ Grot. in loc. ^k See also Deut. v. 14, 15. ^l Gen. ii. 2. ^m Exod. xxxi. 16, 17. ⁿ Which yet is expressed, Deut. v. 14, 15. ^o Indeed in Exod. xxxi. 16, 17. where the sabbath is called *a sign between God and the children of Israel*, the creation is given as a reason, which is universal, and obliging to all mankind; but that might be because it was actually so then, the sabbath being such a sign then between God and the Israelites, and not among the rest of mankind; who had lost the observation of it: and God was pleased to renew it then only among the Israelites.

the designation of any certain day for that seventh. And it is impossible for the Jews to prove, that the day they observe is the seventh from the creation. Besides, that the whole world cannot be tied to the circumstance of time precisely; for in some parts of it the sabbath will fall eighteen hours later than in ^p Palestine.

As the Jews observe their seventh day, when God completed their deliverance from Egypt, so we Christians observe our seventh day, when Christ rose again, and completed our redemption^q, of which their deliverance was a figure; and that on the authority of the Apostles and primitive church.

For, first, St. Paul condemns the keeping the Jewish sabbath day, (on which the Jews observed a strict ceremonial rest, in remembrance of their resting from their bondage in Egypt^r;) because, as he says, that was only a shadow of our redemption by Christ; and the continuing to observe that which was only a shadow or figure, would be a supposing that Christ, the substance, was not yet come. *Secondly*, As God at the first sanctified the seventh day, so our Lord sanctified the first day of the week, by rising from the dead upon it: wherefore the Apostles, who perfectly knew their Master's will, had their holy assemblies and exercises on this day^s, and call it the Lord's day, as being sanctified by him, and set apart for his service^t; and accordingly those Christians who lived nearest to the Apostles, and knew their practice, and indeed the catholic church, have observed this day ever^u since. Further, the sabbath represents the heavenly rest, which remaineth to the people of God after this world shall be ended^x. Thus much for that which seems most necessary in this place to be enquired into of the Ten Commandments: to which we may add the other precepts of an holy and godly conversation in the book of Deuteronomy, which also explains the moral law.

^p Bishop Patrick, in Exod. xvi. 25. So on the globe, about six in the morning at Jerusalem, near 70 degrees longitude, it will be midnight in places of about 340 degrees longitude, as in the West Indies. ^q John xx. 19. ^r Col. ii. 16, 17. ^s John xx. 1. Acts xx. 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 2. ^t Rev. i. 10. ^u Mede, book i. disc. 15. Grot. in Exod. xx. 8. Cave's Primit. Christianity, part i. ch. 7. ^x Heb. iv. 9.

CHAP. IX.

The second sort of Laus, viz. the Ceremonial.

First, CONCERNING the solemn times of the Jews, as the sabbath, (of which before,) their new moons, or times of expressing joy and thanks for blessings received the month past^z, they had besides three solemn times every year, when every male of all the tribes, who was able to perform the journey, was bound to repair to Jerusalem, and to bring his offering with him, as at the Passover, Pentecost, and Feast of Tabernacles^a. The females stayed at home, to take care of children, and other household affairs; though sometimes, out of devotion, the women also went^b. Hereby the generality of the males especially had thrice in the year at least the opportunities of offering up thanksgivings for benefits received, and imploring future blessings, and of being instructed in the worship and service of God; for then, in a peculiar manner, the priests were obliged to read, and, no doubt, interpret, the law^c. And also unity in religious worship was hereby the better preserved, together with mutual love and charity between the tribes, by their yearly assembling together^d. To render them secure, God promised he would so restrain the neighbouring people, that none should *desire their land*, or offer to invade their country, in the absence of the men, *when they shall go to appear before the Lord thrice in the year*^e.

Of these yearly solemn feasts, the first was the *Passover*, when a lamb was killed in the tabernacle, or temple when that was erected, as being the place which God chose^f, and the

^z Dr. Cave has given some account hereof, so far as was answerable to his purpose, in his Apparatus to the Lives of the Apostles; but often so concisely, as made it necessary to compare the law with Josephus, Maimonides, Dr. Lightfoot, and some others; and to enlarge on some particulars. ^z Numb. xxviii. ^a Exod. xxiii.

14, 17. Deut. xvi. 16. ^b 1 Sam. i. Luke ii. ^c Deut. xxxi. 11, 12, 13.

^d So Josephus observes it to be one end of these solemn yearly assemblies, "by the freedom of conversation, and feasting together, to create friendly dispositions one towards another, it being a matter of common convenience, for people of the same stock, interest, and profession, to be thoroughly acquainted." Antiq. book iv. chap. 8. Gr. §. 7. ^e Exod. xxxiv. 24. ^f Deut. xvi. 6. So in Hezekiah's and Josiah's Passover, 2 Chron. xxx. 15, 16. and xxxv. 10, 11.

blood thereof offered by the priest ; after which the lamb was dressed and eaten at home, in their lodgings at Jerusalem, in a solemn manner, with bitter herbs and unleavened bread, as a memorial of their great and happy deliverance from their Egyptian bondage, when the destroying angel passed over their doors, being sprinkled with the blood of the lamb, and killed the first-born of the Egyptians^g. The next was the *Pentecost*, or feast of weeks, being seven weeks or fifty days after the Passover^h, as a memorial of the law delivered on mount Sinai. And the third the feast of *Tabernacles*ⁱ, when for seven days they abode in booths, in memory of their dwelling in tents in the wilderness, and praised God for their vintage and harvest^k.

The other solemn times were the feast of *Expiation*^l, in which the high-priest entered into the chiefest part of the temple, called the holy of holies, with the blood of the sacrifice, to make an atonement, (which signifies a purging from sin.) The feast of *Trumpets*^m, to stir them up to joy and thanksgiving to God. The *sabbatical year*, or every seventh year, when the ground was to lie fallow, and whatever fruits grew of themselves, either out of some seeds fallen the year before, or from the old root, were to be in commonⁿ, to shew that God was the Proprietor or chief Lord of that land^o, so as no person had any peculiar title, but every one held it on the tenure he should appoint. The *year of jubilee* every fiftieth year^p, in which all lands were to be restored to their first owners, or their proper heirs, and all former purchases discharged; whereby their estates were fixed, since no possession could be so alienated, but it would return, and their tribes were preserved distinct; and all servants were set at liberty, to shew they were all alike redeemed by God from the Egyptian slavery.

Secondly, Another part of the ceremonial law was concerning their manner of worshipping God, in sacrifices and offerings, joined with prayers and praises, whereby they might obtain his favour and pardon, and praise him for his goodness.

^g Exod. xii. ^h Lev. xxiii. ⁱ Ibid. ^k Deut. xvi. 13. ^l Lev. xvi.
^m Lev. xxiii. ⁿ Exod. xxiii. 10. Lev. xxv. 1, &c. ^o Lev. xxv. 23. ^p Lev. xxv. 8.

Again, by these sacrifices and oblations, they had a lecture given them of the desert of sin, in the death of the sacrifice: they also acknowledged God as the sovereign Lord and Disposer of the creatures, and paid him a sort of quit-rent, as a proof of their acknowledgment and dependence on him; and also, by consecrating some part of their substance to God, they derived a blessing on the rest.

But the chief ends of sacrificing were to expiate or purge away sin, as being a type of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, to express their thankfulness to God, and confirm their trust in him.

These sacrifices were^q either offered for all the people in general, or for particular persons. The most general was a lamb every morning and evening, (that is, at their third and ninth hour, or about nine in the morning and three in the afternoon,) with a certain measure of flour, and oil, and wine: this was termed a continual burnt-offering^r, which God promised to answer with sanctifying the place with the shechinah, or glory afore-mentioned; whereby God manifested his daily presence with them, called in Scripture his *meeting* them, and *dwelling amongst* them, to be their God, or to grant them tokens of his favour^s.

The kinds of sacrifices were, 1st, *expiatory*, or for the purging away sin. 2dly, *eucharistical*, or as thankful acknowledgments for the use of God's creatures, and his other favours. 3dly, *peace-offerings*^t, so called either because they were said to make or declare peace and reconciliation between God and the offerer, or as a thanksgiving for peace, which, among the Jews, signified all kind of happiness and prosperity^u.

The manner of sacrificing was thus: the beasts which were to be sacrificed, as bullocks, sheep, and goats, were brought to the tabernacle, or temple, and there killed: the priest^x sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about, or poured it

^q Compare Lev. i. ii. iii. with Joseph. Ant. b. iii. c. 9. ^r Exod. xxix. 38, &c.

^s Exod. xx.x. 42, 43, 44, 45.

^t Grot. in Lev. iii. 1. and Ainsworth, *ibid.*

^u See before the general rules for the interpretation of the Scriptures, chap. i. §. ix. num. 7. ^x Lev. i. 5, &c.

out at the bottom of the altar, and, in some cases^y, put it on the tips or horns of the altar, and then laid such parts of the sacrifice as were appointed thereon to be burnt; but in the whole burnt-offerings all entirely except the skin, which belonged to the priest^z. And this was done, that the death and blood shed of the sacrifice might be accepted of God in the sin-offering, instead of the punishment or death of the sinner that brought it, the guilt or punishment of sin being, as it were, transferred or laid on the sacrificed beast, (which might be signified by the offerer's *laying his hand* on the head of the offering^a;) and the offender who brought it freed^b.

This was called an atonement, which signifies a purging away sin, and a propitiation, that is, an appeasing God's anger; and because *the life of the flesh is in the blood thereof*, or the vital spirits in the blood, therefore, that the life of the beast might be offered, the priest was to sprinkle the blood upon the altar^c.

Further, on a lesser altar, in the sanctuary, incense or sweet perfumes were burnt^d, the smoke ascending up to heaven, being a representation of their prayers and thanksgivings. Hence^e, at the time of offering incense, the people are said to be *praying without*, or in their court^f. The sweet odour also of the burning incense prevented the noisome smell, which otherwise the blood and the entrails of the sacrifices would have occasioned, and thereby brought the sacrifice into contempt, as one of the rabbies observes^g. Any Israelite who brought the sacrifice into the court of the tabernacle, or temple, might kill it^h, except doves or young pigeonsⁱ. But that did not make him a priest; for the work of a priest was to *offer the blood by sprinkling it on or about the altar*^k, and to *put fire and wood, and the parts of the sacrifice, upon the altar*^l. And so it was in their sacrificing of the lamb at the Passover: those who brought the lamb, killed it in the court

^y As Lev. iv. 25. ^z Lev. vii. 8. ^a Lev. i. 4. and iii. 2. compared with chap. xvi. 21.

^b Lev. i. 4. and iv. 26, &c. and xvii. 11. Grot. de Satisfactione Christi, cap. x. ^c Lev. xvii. 6, 11, 14.

^d Exod. xxx. 8. ^e Luke i. 10.

^f See also Psal. cxli. 2. Rev. viii. 3. ^g Maimon. Mor. Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 45.

^h Lev. i. 3, 4, 5, 11. ⁱ Lev. i. 15. ^k Lev. i. 5, 11. ^l Ver. 7, 8.

of the tabernacle or temple; but the priest offered the blood thereof, that is, sprinkled it on the altar ^m.

The meaner sort of people, instead of the beasts before mentioned, might offer pigeons and doves for a sacrifice ⁿ, and also certain fruits of the earth, and particularly meal and cakes, with oil poured, and frankincense put thereon; which were to be brought or presented by the person offering to the priest ^o, who was to *bring it unto the altar* ^p, which Josephus interprets to be a *consecrating the offering* ^q: some part of which was to be burnt on the altar; another to maintain the priests that attended on God's service ^r. This meat-offering was voluntary, and distinct from that which constantly attended the daily burnt-sacrifice, spoken of before.

When the peace-offering was made, that is, either of thanksgiving ^s for blessings already received, or for the performance of a vow ^t, which any one had made to God, of offering such a sacrifice, when he should have received such a benefit, or as a voluntary offering made beforehand ^u, in hopes that God would bestow the benefit; when either of these were brought, they who offered did eat thereof ^x, which was a federal act, or a manifest sign of their friendship and reconciliation with God ^y, as it were feasting with him upon what had been offered to him; and therefore, whosoever did eat of the sacrifices offered to other gods, as such professed themselves to be in communion with them, or to be their worshippers and servants ^z. It is further to be observed, that for sacrifices and offerings God required the first-fruits and firstlings, and the male of the herd ^a, and also those who were without blemish or any defect ^b.

Thirdly, Another part of the ceremonial law was concerning the place where they performed their worship, and offered

^m Maimon. Aliique apud Lightfoot's Temple Service, chap. xii. §. 5. and Hor. Hebr. in Matt. xxvi. 19. ⁿ Lev. i. 14. ^o Lev. ii. ^p Ver. 8.
^q Καθαρὰ ζουσι, Gr. lib. iii. cap. 10. Antiq. See, for the Christian oblation, Mede, book ii. chap. 8. ^r Lev. ii. 9, 10. ^s Lev. vii. 11, &c. ^t Ver. 16. ^u Ibid.
^x Ver. 15, 16. Deut. xii. 6, 7. ^y Vide Grot. in Lev. iii. 1. ^z See Exod. xxxiv. 15. and what is said on 1 Cor. viii. x. ^a Exod. xxii. 29. and xiii. 12.
^b Lev. xxii. 17, &c.

the sacrifices; and that was a tabernacle (or, as we should call it, a tent or booth) made with boards and fine hangings, to move up and down, as they journeyed towards Canaan, a pattern whereof was shewn to Moses in the mount^c. It was first set up at Sinai in the wilderness, and so carried along with them when they removed forward. Now, because many places of the New Testament allude to the worship of the Jews, and this tabernacle we are speaking of, they may be the better understood by considering what follows, *viz.* that this tabernacle, and the temple afterwards built by Solomon, were for the main part one like the other, only the tabernacle was to be taken down and set up again, and therefore was made of boards, and hangings, and curtains; but the temple was fixed, and strongly built: the chiefest parts of either were, *1st*, the *tent*, or house itself, which was covered; *2dly*, the *courts*^d.

For the first, the tent, or the house; the chiefest part of this was at the upper end, called the holy of holies, which may be likened to the chancels of our churches. Into this part only the high-priest went once in the year, on the expiation day; therein was placed a chest, called the ark, which had a covering of gold, with a cherubim also of gold at each end. What these cherubims were is not known, only that they had faces and wings, which were stretched over the golden covering before mentioned^e. Within this ark or chest were placed the Two Tables of the Commandments, written by God himself^f. *Note*, that the cherubims were not exposed to the view of the people, much less were they to be worshipped; but were as representations or emblems of the angelical hosts about the throne of God.

This ark, containing the Two Tables of the law, was a visible testimonial and symbol of God's special presence with them, and of the covenant between God and them; for the

^c Exod. xxv. 9. ^d For both which see Exod. xxv. and so on to the end of that book, and 1 Kings vi. ^e In Ezek. i. 10. are mentioned four faces; of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle; but in chap. x. 14. there is not the face of an ox, but

the face of a cherub, with the other three. Hence it is conceived that a cherub had the face of an ox. ^f Exod. xxv.

ark itself, and the golden covering to it, (called the *propitiation*, or *mercy-seat*;) was what God chose, as it were, for his seat or throne: and the Two Tables of the law, within the ark, was that whereby God testified his will, and which contained the condition of the covenant on the people's part, *viz.* their obedience to God's commandments, and therefore it is called, *the ark of the testimony*, and *the ark of the covenant* ^g.

Again, the *cloud* which appeared on the tabernacle, and the bright shining or glory before mentioned ^h that filled it within, plainly manifested the presence of God, and, as it were, his dwelling there ⁱ; for this glory or bright shining represented the majesty of God himself, as hath been observed before ^k, and was called by the Jews *shechinah*, or *shecinah*, that is, an indwelling, from *shacan*, a word that signifies to dwell, because the majesty of God, as it were, dwelt and was present with the church. At first it filled the whole tabernacle, or sanctuary ^l; but afterwards resided most constantly in the holy of holies, on the ark of the testimony, with a great lustre shining from between the cherubims which were thereon, which the Apostle calls *the cherubims of glory* ^m.

The next part of the tent or house was the *sanctuary*, or holy place, like the body of our churches; this was parted from the other by a *veil* or hanging. In this part was the *golden altar of incense*, on which the priests burnt incense every morning and evening throughout the year, and also a *table with shew-bread*, (or bread of the face or presence,) as being set where God manifested his presence; and further, there were *dishes*, and *spoons*, and *bowls*, and a *candlestick*, all which plainly represented God's continual presence, and, as it were, his dwelling among them ⁿ, these being the ordinary furniture of a room and provisions ^o. *Note*, the patterns of all things for the sanctuary, &c. were shewn to Moses in the mount ^p, whereby he was more instructed than he could be by words; and the skill of making them was

^g Exod. xxv. 22. Judg. xx. 27. ^h Chap. ii. §. 5. ⁱ Exod. xl. 34, 35.
 Levit. ix. 23, 24. 2 Chron. vii. 1. ^k Chap. ii. §. 5. ^l Exod. xl. ^m Heb.
 ix. 5. See Lev. xvi. 2. 1 Sam. iv. 22. ⁿ Exod. xxv. 8. ^o See Bishop Patrick
 on Exod. xxv. 8, 30. ^p Exod. xxv. 40.

inspired into the workmen, *whom God filled with the spirit of wisdom for that purpose*¹. And when they were made, they were sanctified or consecrated to a holy use, by being anointed with a peculiar oil², to beget in men the greater reverence.

As for the courts; at first they were inclosed with pillars and hangings; afterwards, by Solomon, with walls. That court next the tent, or house, was *the court of the priests*, where was the brazen altar, on which the holy fire, (which at first God sent down to consume the sacrifice, in testimony of his acceptance³;) was by the priests renewed from time to time, and so kept continually burning⁴. And on this altar the sacrifices of lambs and bullocks, &c. were burnt, especially a lamb every morning and evening⁵. This altar was appointed to be made at the first of wood, overlaid with brass, or else of earth, or of stones, provided they were not polished, perhaps to give no occasion for making any images on them. It was to be five cubits, or two yards and a half square, according to the common notion of a cubit, and three cubits, or a yard and a half, in height⁶. But afterwards, Solomon made one far exceeding that, as his temple exceeded the tabernacle; for it was twenty cubits, or ten yards square: it is said to be made of brass, that is, most likely overlaid with brass, as the former was⁷. None but the priests might enter into the sanctuary, or house, or into this first court. Without this was another court, called *the court of the people*, or *the court of Israel*, whither the people did come to bring their sacrifices, to say their prayers, and perform their vows: and so where we read of any people, except priests, to come to the sanctuary or temple, it is not meant that they came into the house or sanctuary properly so called, no nor into the first court next to it, but only into this second court last spoken of.

The daily service was thus performed: at the usual time, (the third and ninth hours, or as our nine in the morning,

¹ Exod. xxviii. 3. ² So also Exod. xxxi. 3, 4. ³ Exod. xxx. 22, &c.
⁴ Lev. ix. 24. ⁵ Lev. vi. 13. ⁶ Exod. xxviii. ⁷ Exod. xx. 24, 25. and
xxvii. 1, 2, 3, 4. and xxxviii. 1. ^z 2 Chron. iv. 1.

and three in the afternoon,) the lamb (which was the sacrifice) was killed, the blood sprinkled on the brazen altar, and the pieces laid thereon to be burnt; and, in the morning, between the sprinkling of the blood, and the laying of the pieces upon the altar; in the evening somewhat later, between the laying the pieces on the altar, and the drink-offering; the priest, whose turn was to officiate, burnt the incense on the golden altar in the sanctuary^a: at the same time, the people prayed silently, every one by himself in their court: which prayers were offered up by the priest, in virtue of the sacrifice, with that incense of his that went up to heaven, through the intercession of Christ the real Priest, of whom the Jewish one was a type, (as *the smoke of the incense*, offered by the angel, in the Revelations, *which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God*^b. The incense-offering and prayers being ended, and the parts of the sacrifice (as a lamb each morning and evening, besides those which were occasional of divers sorts) being put on the brazen altar in the court of the priests to be burnt, (as hath been said,) the Levites applied themselves^c to the singing of psalms, and the priests^d to the sounding of trumpets: the singers are mentioned in the temple-service, as the trumpets in that of the sanctuary. And we find that David and Solomon appointed the singing and trumpets at the time of sacrificing^e; and that Ezra restored this custom after the return from the Babylonian captivity^f; and that the same continued in after-ages^g.

This gives some account of their public worship, especially of their daily service, both in the tabernacle, and also afterwards in the temple, where only the sacrifices could be offered^h. Nor does it plainly appear, what solemn assemblies they held for religious worship in public, save only at the tabernacle, or temple, when they were settled in Canaan, till their return from the Babylonian captivity; but no doubt

^a Lightfoot's Temple-Service, chap. ix. §. 5. ^b Rev. viii. 3, 4. ^c 2 Chron. v. 12, 13. ^d Numb. x. 8, 10. ^e 1 Chron. vi. 31. and xvi. 7. 2 Chron. v. 12, 13. ^f Ezra iii. 10, 11. ^g Ecclus. i. 15, 16, 17, 18, &c. ^h See Exod. xxix. 38, &c. and xxx. 1—11. Luke i. 10. and compare Lightfoot Hor. in Luc. i. 10. and his Temple-Service, chap. ix. §. 4, 5, 6.

pious persons worshipped God in private, and in their families; wherein they might be assisted by the priests and Levites, who having no distinct portion of the land allotted to them, were dispersed among all the tribes. There were also prophets to assist and direct them in a religious behaviour, such as we find in Daniel¹, who (according to his usual course, as well before as after he was a captive in Babylon) *kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforesime*. As for their worship in their synagogues, after their return, see the fifteenth general Remark on the Gospels. Some understand,^h *They have burnt up all the synagogues (or places of assemblies) of God in the land, of courts, that were built like those in which they prayed in the tabernacle and temple, (that is, were open, as that was before the altar;) and in after-times were called proseuchæ, such as that wherein our Saviour is said to have gone to pray¹, and such as the people, who lived at a distance from the tabernacle, and afterwards from the temple, might build for the exercise of their devotion, before their captivity; these might be the places of their public assemblies (as those called properly synagogues were in after-times) in all parts of their country remote from Jerusalem; to which they usually resorted on the sabbaths and new moons: and hence the Shunamite's husband might ask,^m *Wherefore wilt thou go to him, the prophet Elisha, to-day? It is neither new moon nor sabbathⁿ*.*

Moses only mentions *the court of the tabernacle*, as if at first there was but one^o: but David speaks of *the courts of the Lord^p*; and^q we read of *two courts in the house of the Lord^r*. After Solomon's time, the aforementioned court of the people was divided by a low wall, the outward part of which was for the women, in which it is supposed was the

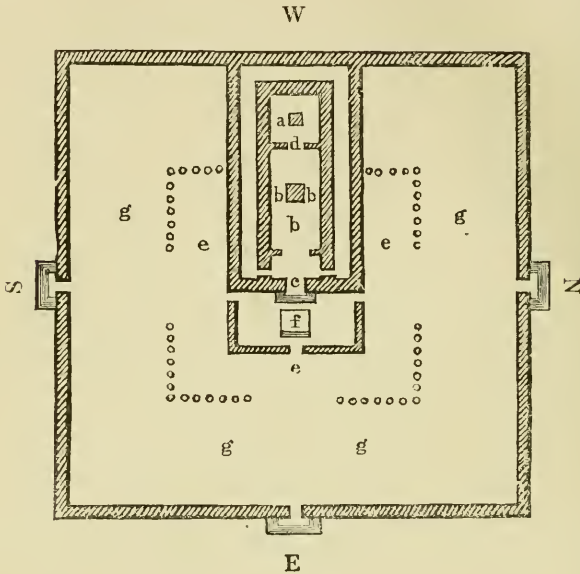
¹ Dan. iv. 10. ^k Psal. lxxiv. 8. ^l Luke vi. 12. Instead of, *in prayer to God*, it might be rendered, *in the proseuchæ, εν τη προσευχη του Θεου*. ^m 2 Kings iv. 23. ⁿ See Dr. Prideaux's Connection, part i. book vi. anno 444. ^o Exod. xxvii. 9. ^p Psal. lxxxiv. 2. ^q In 2 Kings xxi. 5. ^r See also Jer. xxxvi. 10. 2 Chron. iv. 9.

treasury^s, and which is thought to be *the new court*, before which Jehoshaphat stood^t.

Some authors mention *the court of the Gentiles*, surrounding the court of the people; where they might come who were not Israelites, but strangers or proselytes of the gate, who professed to worship the true God, though they were not circumcised, and did not observe the law of Moses. In this court they allowed sheep, and oxen, and doves to be sold for offerings, and *the table of money-changers* to stand, which our Lord overthrew^v. These money-changers might either change other money into half-shekels, for the offering enjoined^x, or else return money for those who lived remote. This court^y of the Gentiles is said to be separated from the other by a low wall, to which the Apostle alludes^z, when he says, that *Christ is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us*, that is, between Jews and Gentiles. The temple stood on mount Moriah, having the front towards the east: but the courts were not on a plain, at the top of the mount, but there was an ascent on the east side, from one court up to another by steps. *Note*, The courts, as well as the house or sanctuary, are in Scripture called by the name of *the temple*^a. Hereto we may add an observation of Josephus^b, that there was “but one holy city, and one temple in it, and one altar; but no more temples or altars in any other city; for the Hebrews are but one nation, and worship but one God.”

^s Mentioned John viii. 20. ^t 2 Chron. xx. 5. and xviii. 19. Josephus, Wars, book vi. ch. 6. Lightfoot's Temple, chap. xvi. xvii. xviii. xix. ^u John ii. 14. Matt. xxi. 12. ^x Exod. xxx. 15. ^y Lightfoot, *ibid.* Mede, book i. disc. 3. ^z Ephes. ii. 14. ^a Matt. xxi. 12, 13. Luke i. 10. ^b Antiquities, book iv. chap. viii. Gr. §. 5.

The following Figure renders this account of the Jewish tabernacle and temple the more plain.



a, The ark in the holy of holies. abbb, The tent or house itself. bbb, The holy place or sanctuary; in which was the altar of incense bb, (with the table and shew bread, &c.) c, the porch. d, The veil which parts the holy of holies from the holy place or sanctuary. eee, The first court, or court of the priests, or the inward court, separated from the rest by a low wall. f, The brazen altar, on which the sacrifices were offered. gggg, The court of Israel, or the court of the people, or the outward court.

NOTE, The form of the Temple is here described according to the delineation thereof in Dr. Wells's *Historical Geography of the Old Testament*.

The great gate was on the east^d. There was no gate on the west; but one on each side, north and south.

^d Therefore Moses and Aaron were appointed to *encamp before the tabernacle eastward, keeping the charge of the sanctuary*, that none but the priests might go into it, Num. iii. 38. So also Maimon. *Mor. Nevoch. par. iii. cap. 45. Sanctum Sanctorum—Majestas divina in Occidente*. And so much the prophet shews from his vision, Ezek. viii. 16. *At the door of the tabernacle were about five and twenty men,*

Towards supplying of the necessaries for the house and public service of God, besides the offerings of the people, Moses was ordered to apply the *half-shekel*, (being about fifteen pence of our money,) which *every one*, or every man, *from twenty years old and above*, rich and poor alike, was to *give an offering unto the Lord*, as a ransom for his soul or life^e, which they were enabled to pay out of the spoils of the Egyptians, at their going forth out of Egypt^f. The Hebrew doctors say, that this was a perpetual ordinance, and that the half-shekel was paid every year by all, except women, bondmen, and children^e. And, by the account of Josephus^h, it was not only paid in the wilderness, for the maintenance of the tabernacle-service, but all along afterwards *to the temple*ⁱ; and even by them who dwelt abroad; for this *didrachma*, or half-shekel, with other “holy money devoted to God, according to custom,” Josephus says, “^k was transmitted to Jerusalem, by the Jews of Mesopotamia and Babylon;” though sometimes it might be neglected^l.

Fourthly, As for the persons who officiated, *viz.* the priests, they were of the family or posterity of Levi, one of Jacob’s

with their backs toward the tabernacle, and their faces toward the east, and they worshipped the sun toward the east. So that the entrance into the temple was toward the east; otherwise the idolaters could not, at the same time, have their backs toward the temple, and their faces toward the east. Compare Ezek. xlvi. 1. and Josephus’s Antiquities, book viii. chap. 2. Hereby the true worshippers looking toward the west, where stood the mercy-seat, (the symbol of God’s presence in the holy of holies,) were prevented from imitating the heathen, especially the Persian and Chaldean idolaters, in worshipping of the sun towards its rising in the east. But on the other hand, the primitive Christians generally turned toward the east in their public solemn adorations, as esteeming that part of the heavens a symbol of Christ, *the Orient*, which we translate the *Day-spring*, Luke i. 78. who is also *the Sun of righteousness*, Malachi iv. 2. and who, as they judged, should appear at his second coming in the eastern part of the world. Tertul. Apol. cap. xvi. Gregory’s Notes and Observations, chap. xviii. Bingham, Antiq. book xiii. chap. viii. §. 15. ^e Exod. xxx. 11, &c. ^f Exod. xii. 35, 36. ^g P. Fagius, Grotius, and Ainsworth, on Exod. xxx. 15, 16. The Seventy call it, Exod. xxx. 13. *διδραχμον*. ^h Wars, book vii. chap. 26. where he says, that the Roman emperor imposed on the Jews the *didrachma*, as a tax to be paid to the Capitol, as formerly to the Temple. ⁱ See also Matt. xvii. 24. ^k Antiq. book xviii. chap. 12. at the beginning. Compare Agrippa’s Letter to Gaius, near the end. Philo. Legat. c. xvi. ^l As appears from 2 Chron. xxiv. 5—15.

twelve sons, who were chosen by God to perform the offices belonging to the public services; therefore their laws were called Levitical laws^m.

Aaron, one of the descendants of Leviⁿ, and Aaron's posterity, were chosen for the priest's office^o, the eldest son to be the high-priest, and the other sons to be priests of the second order, for the usual sacrifices, and offering incense, and interceding with God for the people, in virtue of the sacrifice offered by them. One great difference in their offices was, that the high-priest alone, and he but once in the year, entered into the holy of holies, and made the atonement for himself and the people, in order to the cleansing them from their legal pollutions, and other transgressions^p. All the rest of Levi's race, called Levites^q, were to be as it were attendants on the priests, and employed in bearing the tabernacle, and taking care of the holy vessels, and celebrating the praises of God, with hymns and musical instruments^r. On some of these offices they were to enter at twenty-five years of age, and on others at thirty, and so continue till fifty^s. Afterwards king David appointed them some employment in the house of the Lord at twenty years of age^t, and so did Ezra after the return from the Babylonian captivity^u.

Another remarkable office of the priest was, in a very solemn manner to bless the people^v. Where it is also observable, that God promised to confirm the blessing pronounced by his priests in a peculiar manner^y; *And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them.*

Besides the attendance, which the priests were bound to give in their turns, at the tabernacle and the temple, and on the public service there, they were obliged likewise to study the law, to instruct the people in it, and to conduct them, and watch over them: *z They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law; they shall put incense before thee^a*: and for this reason, they had cities assigned them^b in all the corners

^m Numb. xviii. 1—8. ⁿ Exod. vi. 16. 20. ^o Exod. xl. 12, &c. ^p Levit. xvi. ^q Numb. iii. ^r Numb. iii. 6, &c. and viii. 5. to the end. ^s Numb. viii. 24, 25. and iv. 2, 3. ^t 1 Chron. xxiii. 24. ^u Ezra iii. 8. ^v Numb. vi. 22, &c. ^y Ver. 27. ^z Deut. xxxiii. 10. ^a Deut. xvii. 8—14. ^b Numb. xxxv. 1, &c.

of the land ; that so they might both more easily observe the manners of the people, and that the people might the more easily have recourse to them : therefore they are called *watchmen* and *shepherds* by the prophets ; and therefore we read, ^c *Ask the priests concerning the law ;* and that ^d *the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth ; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts.* We read indeed of some others, who offered sacrifice, and taught the people ; such as Samuel ^e, and Elijah ^f ; but then that was done by an extraordinary power, as prophets, of whatsoever tribe they were ; but the ordinary ministerial offices were proper to the tribe of Levi, and the priestly family.

Amongst the ordinances relating to the high-priests, that is not to be omitted which we read ^g concerning the Urim and Thummim, that were ordered to be put in the breastplate of the ephod, (which was a garment worn by the high-priest,) whereby God was pleased to reveal himself when he was consulted, in weighty cases, that concerned the public, as the choice of magistrates, making war, &c. The word *Urim* is generally understood to signify *light*, and the word *Thummim*, *truth* or *perfection*. The Scripture doth not acquaint us what this Urim and Thummim were, neither is there any mention of them ^h where the making of all Aaron's garments is related. The Jewish doctors say, it was the same with the twelve precious stones, appointed to be set in the breastplateⁱ. Others think, by Urim and Thummim is to be meant only that divine virtue and power given to the breastplate, in its consecration, of obtaining an oraculous answer from God ^k. Much to the same purpose, another very learned person says, It is for this cause, that the Urim and Thummim, the light and the truth, are said to be *in* the ephod, because the high-priest, having this ornament on him, receives from God the light and the truth which he declares to men ^l. Whatever it was, God was pleased to signify his will thereby to his people when they consulted him : but how this was done is uncertain ; whether

^c Haggai ii. 11. ^d Malachi ii. 7. ^e 1 Sam. vii. ^f 1 Kings xviii. ^g Exod. xxviii. 30. ^h Exod. xxxix. ⁱ Verse 17. ^k Dr. Pocock on Hosea iii. 4, p. 149. ^l Du Pin's Hist. of the Canon, book i. chap. ii. §. 2.

by an extraordinary shining of the stones; or by inspiring the high-priest, being arrayed with the ephod, to give an answer to what was desired; or by a voice; or some other way unknown to us. We have instances of the people's consulting with God, and of his answering and directing them^m. One of the learned Jews saysⁿ, that the manner of asking counsel by the Urim and Thummim was thus: When they enquired, the priest, having the ephod on him, stood with his face towards the ark; and the enquirer stood behind him, with his face towards the back of the priest, and asked with a low voice, as one that prayeth by himself; forthwith the Holy Ghost came upon the priest, and he beheld the breastplate, and saw therein, by the vision of prophecy, and gave the answer, &c.

There are some passages wherein the answer is introduced with, *And the Lord said*; which seem to confirm the opinion of those who suppose the answer was given by an audible voice from the mercy-seat^o.

The ceremonial laws are often said to be *statutes and ordinances for ever*; whereas they did cease at Christ's appearing in the world, who was the substance of what those laws were but shadows; or, "as the straw or stalk decays, when the seed is ripened," according to the similitude of one of the ancients^p. Nor were they intended for all the world, but were given to one people; and many of them restrained to one certain land, and particularly the sacrificing of the paschal lamb to Jerusalem^q. God often declares, that he would call the Gentiles; and no one can think, that the Gentiles should be governed by laws peculiar to the Jews, as to keep the passover in remembrance of a deliverance from Egypt, who never were delivered thence; or that all the nations of the earth should go to worship him at Jerusalem: so that by the words *for ever*, as to those laws, is meant only a lasting duration, so long as

^m Judges i. 1. and xx. 18, 23, 27, 28. 1 Sam. xxiii. 3, 9. and xxx. 7, 8. 2 Sam. v. 19. ⁿ Maimon. apud Ainsworth on Exod. xxviii. 30. ^o As Judges i. 1, 2. and xx. 18, 23, 28. 1 Sam. xxiii. 2, 11, 12. 2 Sam. ii. 1. See Dr. Prideaux's *Old and New Testament connected*, p. i. book 3. sub. an. 535. ^p Irenæus, lib. iv. cap. 7. But the Jews esteem this as one of the fundamentals of their law, that it was never to be abrogated. Maimon. *Porta Mosis*, p. 175. edit. Oxon. 1655. ^q Deut. xvi. 5, 6.

the Jewish state continued, and till such a remarkable period of time came, which should alter the state of things, *viz.* till the time of the Messiah, or our Lord Jesus Christ, and the state of the Gospel; when God should alter the obligation of them by a new revelation of his will. In such a sense the servant was said to serve his master *for ever*^r, that is, during his master's life, or till the year of jubilee: and Samuel is said to abide before the Lord *for ever*^s, that is, as long as he lived. And as to the pretence of the Jews, that not only their law is said to continue for ever, but to their seed *for all generations*^t; they may as well argue^u, that they should be still in possession of Canaan, because it is said that God promised it to Abraham and to his seed *for an everlasting possession*.

Further, there was to be established another priesthood than that of Aaron, *viz. after the order of Melchisedec*, and such a priest was to *judge among the heathen*^x. The prophets expressly foretold the end and period of the ceremonial law, the destruction of the sanctuary, and the ceasing of the sacrifice and oblation^y, and that the terms of the new covenant should consist not so much in the outward ceremonial, as in the inward spiritual true righteousness, which God would assist them in, by his grace working *in their hearts*^z. So that it cannot so well be said that their laws were to be abrogated by a contrary law, as that they were to cease of themselves; the nature of them so requiring, that when the substance appeared, the type or representation thereof ought to vanish; and the son being grown up, there should be no need of the office of tutors or governors, according to the argument of the Apostle^a.

We are further to understand, as to those ceremonial laws, that notwithstanding God therein appointed so many sacrifices and offerings; yet they were not ordained primarily for themselves, but secondarily^b, as an acknowledgment of the only true God, and a method of worshipping him; and also as a testimony of the repentance and gratitude of the offerer, and

^r Exod. xxi. 6.^s 1 Sam. i. 22.^t Gen. xvii. 9.^u From ver. 8.^x Psal. cx. 4, 6.^y Dan. ix. 26, 27.^z Jer. xxxi. 31, 32, 33. Heb. viii. 9, 10.^a Gal. iv. 1, 2, 3.^b Maim. Mor. Nev. par. iii. cap. 32.

of his desire of making atonement and reconciliation with God, in order to be encouraged to serve him better for the future: without this, God did not command, nor promise, to accept any sacrifices; and therefore when men came to prefer sacrifices and offerings, barely considered in themselves, before the greater things of the law, and valued themselves as acceptable in themselves, and placed their efficacy in a naked rite, without a sincere repentance and obedience, God would no longer own them. This remark explains those passages, which seem to disparage and vilify sacrifices, as if they were a service God never appointed nor approved, (according to the first general rule foregoing for interpreting the holy Scripture;) such as, *“I desired mercy, and not sacrifice, that is, comparatively, mercy (which is of more respect with God) rather than sacrifice; as it follows, and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings”*^d.

Next we may enquire into some particular reasons of the rites and customs enjoined the Israelites. In the first place, the great design of the law, a learned Jew (as also the ancient fathers of the Christian church) observes, was to “*prevent idolatry,*” which had then overspread the world; and to that end, to keep that people close to a peculiar worship of the true God, by his own appointment; and that they should not banker after the ways and customs of religious worship, performed to idols and false gods, either by the Egyptians, from whom they came, or the inhabitants of Canaan, whither they were going, or the other nations round about them; as they might have been inclined to do, had not God thus ordained so many rites and ways of worship of his own choosing, together with the time, place, manner, and all the smallest circumstances^f.

And as for the rites and ceremonies forbidden in the law,

^c Hosea vi. 6. ^d So Psal. li. 16. Jer. vii. 21. Micah vi. 6. Isa. i. 11—20, &c.
^e Maimon. Mor. Nev. p. iii. cap. 29. Prima legis nostræ intentio Idololatriam tollere, memoriam illius, et omnium eorum quæ illi adhærent, aut hominibus ad illam vel minimam occasionem præbent, delere. Irenæus, lib. iv. cap. 28. Facilem ad Idola reverti populum erudiebat per multas avocationes, &c. Sic Tertull. contra Marc. lib. ii. cap. 18. et Just. Martyr. Trypho. p. 58, et 203. ^f Lev. xviii. 3, 4. Deut. xii. 29. to the end of the chapter, and xiv. 12.

the Jews were most in danger of imitating the neighbouring Chaldean, Syrian, Egyptian, and Canaanitish idolaters, who were afterwards called by the general name of Zabii^g, whose books the aforesaid Jewish doctor read, and learned many of their customs, and from thence observed, that many particular rites were forbidden by God, in opposition to the rites of those idolaters, such as to keep festivals in honour of the planets, and for their worship, because the idolaters did so, as thinking their influence promoted the fruits of the earth, which therefore depended on their worshipping of them^h. So again, it was forbidden to wear *a garment of linen and woollen*ⁱ, or to *round the corners of their heads*^k, because the idolatrous priests were wont so to do. Likewise it was ordered, that *a woman should not wear that which pertaineth to a man, neither should a man put on a woman's garment*^l, because such was the practice of the Zabian idolaters, in their idol-worship^m. And possibly the same may be said of *unclean meats*, especially *swine*ⁿ. This truth, that many rites and customs, which seem to us indifferent, and of no great moment, were forbidden in the law; and also that other legal rites were instituted in opposition to the idolatrous ones, appears from the charge, *After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwell, ye shall not do; and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, ye shall not do: I am the Lord your God; ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, &c.* In which words it is implied, not only that the idolatrous rites of the Gentiles were forbidden, but that those of God's appointment were directly contrary to the other: and we find the Jews often hated and accused, by reason of the diversity of their laws and customs from those

^g Pocock, Specimen Hist. Arab. p. 138. ^h Deut. iv. 19. ⁱ Lev. xix. 19.
^k Verse 27. ^l Deut. xxii. 5. ^m Maimon. Mor. Nev. par. iii. c. 29, 30, 37.
The same author indeed says, par. *ibid.* cap. 32. "Retinuit Deus cultus, eosque a rebus et phantasmatis, quæ nullam veritatem habent, ad nomen suum venerandum transtulit:" but then he instances only in such as most likely were at first appointed by God, as temples, altars, sacrifices, and prostrations, which the heathen imitated; and proselytes might have been discouraged by their abolishment. ⁿ Bishop Patrick in Lev. xi. 7. and Spencer de Leg. Hebræor. lib. ii. cap. i. §. 5. ^o Lev. xviii. 3, 4, 5.

of other people: on this account, Haman accused them to Ahasuerus; ^p *There is a certain people scattered abroad, and their laws are diverse from all people.* And in after-ages, they were represented by the Roman historian ^q, “as a people whose religious rites were contrary to all the world besides: that what to others was most sacred, they accounted profane; and on the contrary, allowed and observed what by others was forbidden.” The general cause of all which was, that they might be the farthest removed from the idolatrous worship which had so much prevailed in the world, and be preserved in the peculiar worship of Jehovah, the true God, who in a particular manner had adopted them for his children, and chosen them for his servants: and no doubt, the cause why a more particular reason cannot be given of some prohibited rites, that may seem slight to us now, is, what the aforementioned rabbi observed, because “we know no more of the particular rites of the ancient idolaters.”

Some nevertheless have thought, that many of the Mosaical ordinances were derived from the heathen customs, especially of the Egyptians; which they suppose might have been innocently brought in at the first, and reformed from the impious additions with which they had been adulterated: but this to others doth not appear so probable, who consider that the Jewish ceremonies were of divine appointment; and would God ordain such customs as the Devil himself was the author of? Again, God separated the Jews from the rest of the world; and it was on the account of this separation, that they were esteemed *an holy and peculiar people unto God*^s. They are therefore commanded expressly not to imitate the doings of the Egyptians or Canaanites, *neither to walk in their ordinances*^t: so that if there are some Mosaical ceremonies which seem like to those which were observed in Egypt, and the neighbouring places, it may be either because the heathen imitated the Judaical rites, as in particular the Egyptians

^p Esth. iii. 8. ^q Tacitus, Hist. lib. v. cap. 4. And Dion. Cassius represented them as differing from all others, both in their way of living and religion. Dion. Cas. lib. xxxvii. p. 37. ^r Maimon. *ibid.* cap. 49. ad finem. ^s Lev. xx. 26. Deut. xiv. 1, 2. ^t Lev. xviii. 3.

might learn circumcision ^u from their neighbours the Ishmaelites, Abraham's posterity by Hagar, or some other people might therein imitate the posterity of Abraham by Keturah, or light on some of their religious acts by chance, or else be led to them by the natural tendency of things; as there are many things which men do very like, and none of them learn from one another.

Secondly, Their ceremonial rites were types and figures of Christ and the Gospel. A type ^x is a likeness or resemblance which one thing has to another, as a shadow to the substance, or a picture to a man; and indeed the general dispensation under the law looks towards the coming of the Messiah: hence the law is called the *shadow of good things to come*^y, especially the temple ministrations had a peculiar glance at a future state under the Gospel; and those sacrifices of bullocks, and goats, and lambs, did resemble and shadow forth the great sacrifice of Christ offered on the cross, when he died in our stead, and shed his blood, to make an atonement (or pacify God's wrath) for us: and especially as a lamb was a sacrifice ^z, upon which God delivered the Israelites from the slavery in Egypt ^a; so Christ was the true *Lamb of God*^b, that was sacrificed for the sins of the world, to deliver us from the dominion of sin, the devil, and hell ^c. Hence the Apostle, *Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us*^d. So also at Christ's crucifixion, the soldiers not breaking his legs, as they had done the legs of the two thieves ^e, was typified in the paschal lamb, of which a bone

^u Vide Grot. de Veritate Relig. Christianæ, lib. i. §. 16. and Annot. ibid. and Spencer de Leg. Hebr. lib. i. c. 4. §. 4. ^x Ab *τυπον*, hence *τυπον ἡλων*, the print of the nails. John xx. ^y Heb. x. 1. ^z Exod. xii. 27. and xxxiv. 35. ^a Exod. xii. ^b John i. 29. ^c Eph. v. 2. Heb. ix. 28. John i. 29. ^d 1 Cor. v. 7. From this appears the mistake of those who think that God designed the Ten Commandments alone for the standing laws of the Israelites, and did not ordain the particular ceremonial laws till after the idolatry of the golden calf, (Exod. xxxii. 2.) since the ceremonial law was ordained partly, if not chiefly, to foreshadow and represent Christ: and in Exod. xxix. the ceremonies of consecrating the priests, and of the daily burnt offering, were appointed before the commission of their idolatry: though perhaps the ceremonial laws might be multiplied on that account, for the reason above mentioned, viz. to preserve them from all instances of the idolatry of the heathen world, seeing they were so inclined thereto. ^e John xix. 33.

was not to be broken^f. The lamb was also to be *without blemish*^g, typifying Christ, whom the Apostle calls *a lamb without blemish and without spot*^b. And as no other place but one, the temple, was allowed for the sacrifices, so it is the only Mediator Jesus Christ, by whom alone man's sins could be expiated: so likewise the propitiatory or mercy-seatⁱ was a figure of Christ, the true propitiation for reconciling us to God^k.

Again, the high-priest on the expiation day, having slain the sacrifice, entered into the holy of holies, to make an atonement with the blood of the sacrifice (sprinkling it on the mercy-seat, and afterwards on the altar) for himself, and for the sins of the people^l. This did in a most lively manner represent Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, who having offered himself on the altar of the cross, and being ascended into heaven, *entered into the true holy place*, that is, the highest heavens, by virtue of the sacrifice of his own blood, *to appear in the presence of God*, not indeed to expiate for himself, but for us^m. As also the scape-goat, on which Aaron, by laying his hands on his head, *put the iniquities of the people*ⁿ, prefigured our Lord, who *his own self bare our sins in his own body, and was made sin for us*^o. So that whatsoever virtue was in those sacrifices, for the forgiveness of sins, did operate only as they had relation to Christ, and through his death alone. Whence we are to consider the Jewish sacrifices in a twofold respect, *viz. carnal and spiritual*: in the first place, as they served to *the purifying of the flesh*^p, that is, the taking away the uncleanness the Jews contracted by the breach of the law, and the exempting them from the punishment which by the law was to be inflicted for the same, in order to their enjoyment of the benefit of the Jewish religion, and of the land of Canaan. Now, what the sacrifices, as types, effected in the carnal sense, that in the second place, the antitype, or sacrifice of Christ's death represented by them, effected in the spiritual sense, that is, the cleansing or purifying the soul from the guilt of sin,

^f Exod. xii. 46. ^g Exod. xii. 5. ^h 1 Pet. i. 19. ⁱ Appointed Exod. xxv. 17. ^k Rom. iii. 25. ^l Lev. xvi. ^m Heb. ix. x. ⁿ Lev. xvi. ^o 1 Pet. ii. 24. ^p 2 Cor. v. 21. ^q Heb. ix. 13.

and an exemption from the punishment of it, in order to the obtaining *the eternal inheritance*⁹. So that, however, as St. Paul argues, justification could not be *from* the law, or by virtue of the law, yet *under* the law, which typified Christ, there was represented the redemption, in order to justification.

Once more ; the *glory*, often mentioned before, that appeared breaking through a cloud, and sometimes filled the tabernacle, as it was a sign of God's presence, so it seems to represent the two natures of our blessed Saviour, *God Man* ; the lustre and bright shining representing the glorious Godhead, as the cloud did his manhood, or his being clothed with flesh : accordingly the Apostle ^r calls him *the brightness of the glory of God*, and ^s *the Lord of glory* : so he appeared to St. Paul, who *saw a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun shining round about him*¹.

This representation of Christ the Messiah and Saviour, so long beforehand, in the ceremonies and appearances under the law, shews, that the coming of Christ was the great design of God, the effect of his determinate counsel, and of his wisdom and power, even before the foundation of the world : accordingly this redemption of the world by Christ ought to be esteemed by us as a work which the great God himself valued so highly, and intended from the beginning as his grand work and most glorious design : therefore it was foretold (as hath been observed) at the beginning of the world, shadowed out in the law, and represented in the lives and actions^u of the most eminent persons amongst the Jews in all ages, as Moses, Aaron, Joshua, David, &c. and all along pointed at by the holy men and prophets of God. *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation ?*

Note also, 'That our Christian prayers and almsdeeds are compared in Scripture to the Jewish sacrifices and offerings ; and so are called the Christian sacrifices and oblations^x.

Lastly, Many of the ceremonial laws instructed the people in the principles of inward purity, and a virtuous behaviour ;

⁹ Heb. ix. 14, 15.

^r Heb. i. 3.

^s 1 Cor. ii. 8.

^t Acts xvii. 13.

^u As the ancient fathers observed. Vide Grot. in Matt. i. 22. ^x 1 Pet. ii. 5. Heb. xiii. 15. Phil. iv. 18.

as their many washings signified the purity that should be in their hearts and consciences: their not eating blood taught them to abstain from cruelty and murder; the smoke of their incense ascending up to heaven, instructed them to send up their morning and evening prayers to God. Moses himself expounds the law in a moral sense^y, *circumcise the foreskin of your hearts*, cast off all vile affections. It is evident that the Old Testament gives two different representations of religion: accordingly, the notion which the patriarchs, and prophets, and other eminent persons among the Jews, had of their religion, was very different from that of the more ignorant and inferior sort; for these last seem to have attended most to the mere outward ceremonial ordinances, overlooking the spiritual intention of the same; whereas the former looked on their religion as on institutions more spiritual and agreeable to the two fundamental principles of natural religion, the love of God above all things, and of our neighbour as ourselves; both which are required^z. These persons lived under a grateful sense of the Divine Providence, and were supported with the hopes of obtaining an interest in God's promises, especially the principal one of the Messiah and Saviour^a. Thus much we learn from St. Paul, who calls the mere outward and ceremonial appointments, considered only by themselves, *weak and beggarly elements*^b; whereas the law, considered with the spiritual intention of it, is *holy, just, and good*^c; and the patriarchs, Abel, Enoch, Noah, and Abraham, were *justified by faith*^d, *and did eat the same spiritual meat*, that is, mystically tasted of the benefits of Christ, by faith in him who was to come^e, and embraced the same *heavenly promises, having seen them afar off*^f. But by degrees the Jewish church became so corrupt, that this spiritual design of the law was little attended to, the generality of the Jews contenting them-

^y Deut. x. 16. ^z Deut. vi. 5. Lev. xix. 18. compared with Matt. xxii. 36, &c. to which may be added, Micah vi. 8. *What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* See also Isa. i. 11—20. and lxvi. 2, 3. Compare Ecclus. xxxv. 1, 2, 3. ^a This is observed by Ignatius, Epist. ad Philadelph. num. 5, 9. ^b Gal. iv. 9. ^c Rom. vii. 12, 14. *Dignissima sunt lectu quæ apud Grot. de Jure Belli et Pacis, lib. i. cap. ii. §. 6. num. 4.* ^d Heb. xi. 13. ^e 1 Cor. x. 3, 4. ^f Heb. xi. 13.

selves with a mere bodily observance of the ceremonial part, as we shall find when we come to consider their state in the times of the Gospel.

Thus much for the second sort of laws among the Jews, namely, the *ceremonial laws*: and it is hoped by the remarks foregoing one may much better understand the New Testament.

CHAP. X.

Of the Judicial Law.

III. A THIRD sort of laws God gave the Jews were judicial laws, which may be compared to our statute laws in England. They were, for the most part, peculiarly calculated for the Jewish state in their own country; but are not to be made a general pattern and standard for the laws of other nations, unless where there is an equal concurrence of circumstances, and the application is manifest. In such a case, indeed, we may rely on the infinite wisdom of God for equity and proportion: or where any particular law is a branch of the law of nature, the reason of which is immutable and eternal; otherwise these judicial laws went off with the Jewish commonwealth.

These were such as concerned their estates and possessions, their cattle and goods, and concerning buying and selling, &c. containing the rules which God would have his people observe in the land which he had given them^a.

It hath been questioned how far these judicial laws oblige Christians in two particulars therein forbidden, supposing them not to be forbidden by the laws of other countries. In the first place, those concerning marrying with near kindred^b: some of the degrees mentioned^c, may be supposed to be such as were esteemed unlawful by many of the heathen world, and so were truly abominations; but it cannot be affirmed that all the rest are such, especially since the law, in some cases, ordered the marrying within one degree forbidden^d, *viz.* that of a brother's wife; and therefore the term last mentioned

^a Exod. xxi. xxii. xxiii. part of Numbers, and part of Deuteronomy. ^b Lev. xviii.

^c Ver. 7—14. ^d Lev. xviii. 16.

abomination cannot be applied to all the degrees alike; but as to those forbidden^e, they are in the same sense as 'the sacrifice^a in which was a blemish, or any evil favouredness, is termed an abomination, not in itself, but because God positively forbid it. It is also thought that the more remote degrees were forbidden, not as strictly abominations in themselves, but that they might serve as an hedge or outwork, to keep them at a greater distance from the others that were so^g.

There hath also been a dispute concerning another of these laws, *viz.* that of usury, whether it be strictly binding upon Christians. Usury, in itself considered, cannot be said to be contrary to justice, because it is most reasonable that the lender should have and contract for a part of the gain and advantage which the borrower may make of his money, as well as a landlord may expect rent for his land: and though the Mosaical law forbid the Jews to take usury of their brethren, or natural Jews, yet they were allowed to lend upon usury to a stranger^b, which God would not have allowed, if usury had been morally evil in itself. Indeed usury, as well as any other dealing, is subject to abuse, which is to be avoided, either in respect to the borrower, who, if poor and necessitous, may hope for a free loan from his fellow Christian; or in respect to the manner of the usury, by exacting, and thereby eating out another's estate, which is therefore termed biting usury, and plainly inconsistent with our Saviour's rule, of doing unto others as we would they should do unto us. In other cases usury seems not unlawful to Christians, when no other circumstance makes it so: as for the law against usuryⁱ, it seems to be confined only to the children of Israel in their own country; as that other political law concerning lands, to be released every seventh year to their former owner^k, and such-like judicial laws; and as for the other places^l, they are to be referred to the first limitation of usury to the Jewish people. *Lastly*, As for the command of Christ^m, *Lend*,

^e Ver. 14. ^f Deut. xvii. 1. ^g Hottinger. Thesaurus, lib. ii. cap. iii. §. 2. p. 554. de Lege scripta, Sepimentum legis, &c. ^h Deut. xxiii. 20. ⁱ Exod. xxii. 25. and in other places in the Old Testament. ^k Deut. xv. 1, 2. ^l Psal. xv. 5, &c. Ezek. xviii. 8. ^m Luke vi. 35.

hoping for nothing again, that is to be explained from the verse foregoing, where our Saviour enjoins his followers to be more kind and loving than the heathen, or sinners, who would do good, and lend to them only of whom they hoped to receive as much again; whereas Christ teaches us a more exalted charity and good will, to be merciful, and to love and lend even where we can hope for nothing again, that is, have no reason to expect the like kindness ourselves another time.

CHAP. XI.

Blessings and Punishments under the Law.

WHEN we consider the promises and threats, whereby God was pleased to enforce the observance of his laws, and to prevent disobedience, we find that temporal things were more expressly insisted on; as, on the one hand, long life and prosperity; on the other, misery, loss, and death^a. And this, it hath been esteemed, was done by reason of the grossness and dulness of the people of the Jews, who, being more affected with sensible things, were therefore more easy to be wrought upon by such expectances. There are indeed no express promises of eternal life to be found in the letter of the law of Moses; and however the earthly promises might be intended as signs and earnest of the heavenly^b, and therefore may be said to imply a future happiness in the next world, as the Jewish rabbies affirm^c; yet this future happiness, or life eternal, is no where literally inserted into the covenant which God made with the Jews on mount Sinai, nor was there any occasion for it. The account given of this matter by a learned person^d is worth the consideration of the reader. “The law of Moses, being a political law, was not intended for the government of mankind, but of one particular nation, and therefore was established, as political laws are, upon temporal promises and threatenings. God had raised the Israelites from being no

^a See Deut. vi. vii. ^b See what is said before concerning the covenant which God made with Abraham. ^c Hottinger. Thesaurus, lib. ii. cap. iii. §. 2. ad initium, p. 545. ^d Dr. Pocock on Hos. ii. 3. compared with Archbishop Tillotson, serm. v.

vol. iii. on Luke xx. 38. p. 165.

people, to be a peculiar people to himself among all nations of the earth, according to his gracious promise to Abraham, whose seed they were. And as the laws did more particularly concern the well-ordering of them as a peculiar people, and a distinct nation in their outward government or policy, both ecclesiastical and civil; so did their blessings and curses, for the most part, according to the most obvious meaning of the words, seem to respect their outward condition and welfare in this world, in that land which God should give them, rather than what should concern the state of their souls in the other world. And no marvel that no such particular or distinct mention of that should be made in the promises or threats, blessings or cursings, under the law, the knowledge thereof being not a new thing, which they were now first to be made acquainted with. It is to be supposed that they had concerning that been sufficiently instructed all along from their father Abraham, of whom God saith, that he knew him; that he would command his children, and his household after him, and they should keep the way of the Lord^e; of whose doctrine in this kind, and from him propagated to his posterity, in the Scripture testimony is given^f. They were therefore now to be instructed not so much concerning the principles of religion, that is, the inward part of it, and a spiritual worship, as concerning their outward behaviour, that it might be worthy of it, and such whereby they might glorify that God whom they hitherto served, and who had now so greatly rewarded and highly exalted them for their service, before the eyes of all nations, as to make them from being a few to be a glorious kingdom, &c.” So that it was not the business of the law to establish an eternal state of happiness; but as the people of all nations are encouraged in their obedience and subjection to governors, from the benefit of safety and protection under them, so the Israelites were to be settled in a regular method of life, both religious and civil, and encouraged therein by temporal promises, the happiness of the next world having been communicated to their father Abraham, on which they had cause to rely.

^e Gen. xviii. 19.

^f See Heb. xi. 9, 10, 13.

However, the holy Scriptures of the Old Testament plainly suppose a separate state after this life, and a future happiness. It could be on no other principle that Saul desired Samuel's ghost to be brought up to him^g. St. Paul likewise assures us, that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob looked beyond the temporal Canaan, even for a better country, that is, an heavenly^h; and that Moses had respect unto the recompence of the rewardⁱ, which could not mean the possession of the land of Canaan; for Moses only had a view of it from mount Pisgah, but never set foot thereon. Again, this reward is set in the balance against the enjoyments of pleasure for a season^k, and therefore the reward must be future and eternal: and Daniel, one of the later prophets, more expressly mentions the resurrection^l. And therefore, although Christ had in a more clear manner^m, and also in respect to the resurrection of the body, brought life and immortality to light through the Gospelⁿ, yet even before and under the law, holy men, and those who were more spiritual, were encouraged to love and please God, not only for the obtaining peace and prosperity in a temporal Canaan upon earth, but also in hopes of a future estate of joy and bliss. Upon this account a Jewish doctor tells us, those promises of good things were to be understood of furnishing them with necessaries, in order to further and promote their obedience: for, says he, no man can serve God as he ought when he is sick, or in want, or vexed with wars; therefore hath God promised the contrary blessings, that they might perfect their obedience, and be worthy of the life of the world to come^o; only the Sadducees, who received nothing as divine Scripture, but what was expressly mentioned in the law of Moses, denied a resurrection: but then this notion of a resurrection was more obscure at the first, and began to clear up after the return from the Babylonian captivity, and as the times of the Messiah

^g 1 Sam. xxviii. 11. ^h Heb. xi. 16. ⁱ Ver. 26. ^k Ver. 25. ^l Dan. xii. 2. ^m For the Jews had only gross perceptions of future happiness in *mundo futuro*; some placing it in the enjoyment of dainty provisions, fine houses and apparel, in the garden of Eden; others in being made great persons, and enjoying the world under the Messiah; a third sort in being restored to enjoyments at the resurrection. Maimon. Porta Mosis, p. 134, &c. and 150, 161. ⁿ 2 Tim. i. 10. ^o Maimon. apud Patrick in Deut. xxviii. 12.

drew on^p. And in Christ's time the Jews founded their hopes of remission of sins and eternal life on the Scriptures of the Old Testament^q? Although, after all, the generality of the Jews, especially of those who were of more gross and carnal perceptions in some ages, seem to look no farther than on temporal blessings and curses, which the sanctions of the law pointed to, and which they chiefly hoped for under the Messiah^r.

[After what has been said of the promises made to the Jews, in respect to this world, and their comfortable abode in the land of Canaan, it may not be improper to remark, that the promises of blessings in this life, contained in the Old Testament, and particularly in the Psalms, are to be applied by us, under the Gospel, in a more restrained sense, as the New Testament instructs us; *viz.* so far in general as that whilst we seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all the necessaries of this life, such as convenient food and raiment, and suitable refreshments, shall be added unto us by the divine Providence, and all things shall work together for good to them that love God; which is a sure and sufficient foundation for our hope and trust in God, that he will do for us what he knows to be best and fittest for us in all cases.]

Under the law, the lesser offences and legal pollutions were expiated by sacrifices and offerings^s. The greater were punished with a fine, restitution, and loss of the same limb which any one deprived another of^t; or by scourging^u. The greater offences were punished with death, such as murder, smiting and cursing parents, stealing of men, witchcraft, bestiality, idolatry, adultery, sodomy, and blasphemy. The

^p See 2 Maccab. vii. 9, 11, 14, 23, 36. and xii. 44. Wisd. iv. 15, 16. and v. 1—17. ^q Acts x. 43. John v. 39. ^r Vide Grot. in Matt. v. 20. and the second general remark on the Gospels. ^s Levit. iv. &c. ^t Exod. xxi. &c. This the Jewish rabbies and Christian interpreters esteem is not literally to be understood, unless, upon application made to the judges, the offending person refused to redeem it with money, according to Exod. xxi. 22. in another case, *He shall pay us the judges determine.* The objection from Lev. xxiv. 19. *As he hath done, so shall it be done unto him,* is answered by understanding the passage in general, as he hath injured another, so he shall suffer injury himself. And whereas it is said, Numb. xxxv. 31. *Ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer,* it should seem, they might in other cases. Compare Joseph. Antiq. book iv. chap. viii. [Gr. §. 35.] and Ainsworth on Exod. xxi. 25. ^u Lev. xix. 20.

Jewish doctors mention four kinds of death, as by stoning, burning, beheading with the sword, and strangling^x. But the putting to death seems to be chiefly by stoning^y. Sometimes the offender was cut off by the immediate hand of God^z.

CHAP. XII.

What befel the Israelites after their removal from Mount Sinai.

THUS much for the laws God gave the Israelites whilst they were in the wilderness at mount Sinai, where they stayed almost a year; for they came thither in the third month after their going forth out of Egypt^a, and removed thence in the second month of the second year^b, from whence they journeyed forwards; and at the time of the first ripe grapes, *viz.* in the fifth month of the second year^c after their departure from Egypt, were got as far as Kadesh-barnea, near to the south border of Canaan^d. From thence spies were sent to search the nature of the land, and of its inhabitants. These spies returning, and discouraging the people, and they murmuring, God was so provoked, that he made them turn backwards again, and wander round about from place to place in the wilderness, till all that generation of men of war, *viz.* six hundred thousand, and three thousand five hundred and fifty, which were then twenty years old and upward, except Caleb and Joshua, died in the wilderness; and it was thirty-eight years^e before the Israelites came again near the borders of Canaan; so that they journeyed in the wilderness forty years from their departure out of Egypt^f; all which time they lived chiefly on manna, which God gave them from heaven^g, which did not cease till they had passed over Jordan, and were actually entered into the land of Canaan, and did eat of the corn of the land, and then the manna ceased^h.

^x For the first they quote Deut. xxii. for the second, Lev. xx. for the third, Exod. xxii. and for the last, Lev. xx. See Casaubon. Exercit. xvi. numb. 92. §. 77. p. 538.

^y Deut. xvii. 5, 6, 7. Exod. xxi. 12. and xxii. 18, 19, 20, &c. Lev. xx. 2, 27. xxiv. 16, 23.

^z Lev. xx. 3.

^a Exod. xix. 1.

^b Numb. x. 11.

^c Vide Usserii Annales, A. M. 2514.

^d Numb. xiii. 20, 26.

^e Deut. ii. 14.

^f See Numb. i. 45, 46. and chap. xiii. xiv.

^g Exod. xvi. 35.

^h Josh. v. 12.

There are two other passages in the history of the Israelites marching towards Canaan, which are more particularly to be considered. The first, concerning the insurrection of Korah and his accomplices against Moses and Aaron, because they had not that share in the government and the priesthood which they ambitiously aspired toⁱ. God vindicated his own choice of officers and governors by a miraculous opening the earth, and swallowing up the seditious conspirators against the government, and sacrilegious invaders of the priest's office; a terrible example, as St. Jude observes, for all such who, in like manner, *despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities, lest they also perish in the gainsaying of Core*^k.

Again, we find in this history, that the censers, in which Korah and his company burnt incense, were commanded by God to be for ever after separated to a holy use, for making plates for covering the altar; and the reason is expressly given, because that although they were the censers of those presumptuous sinners, yet they *offered them before the Lord, therefore they are hallowed*^l; plainly instructing us in the respect due unto sacred things, which having been consecrated to God, ought not to be employed to common uses, but for his honour and service: and the judgments of God afterwards shewn upon Belshazzar, for his profaning the sacred vessels of the temple, sufficiently evidence how provoking are the sins of sacrilege and profaneness^m.

Secondly, The other passage is that concerning Balaamⁿ, whom some think to have had the knowledge of the true God, and to have been a prophet^o; and that he therefore told the messengers who were sent to him, *I will bring you word again as the Lord shall speak unto me; and I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God*; but that he was covetous and ambitious, and loved the wages of unrighteousness^r, and therefore God gave him up to the delusions of evil spirits and enchantments. Others do rather believe him to have been an

ⁱ Numb. xvi. ^k Jude 8, 11. ^l Numb. xvi. 38. ^m Dan. v. ⁿ Numb. xxii. See Dr. Pocock on Hosea xi. 1. p. 576. ^o As St. Peter calls him, 2 Pet. ii. 16. ^p Numb. xxii. 8. ^q Ver. 18. ^r 2 Pet. ii. 15.

heathen sorcerer. He is expressly called a soothsayer, or diviner^s, as being famous for the arts of magic and enchantments; accordingly he is said to *seek for enchantments*^t. The Apostle might call him a prophet, as being esteemed so, and the expression, *the madness of the prophet*, is not favourable; and as to what himself said of bringing word as the Lord should speak, and that he could not go beyond the word of the Lord his God, that shews he was over-ruled by the spirit of prophecy, and received counter-orders from the true God; so that he was unable to find any enchantment against Jacob, or divination against Israel^u. Balak, king of Moab, being jealous of the number and success of the Israelites, sent for this Balaam to curse them, since it was an opinion that such persons had a power, by the help of their gods, to afflict all those whom they would, and blast their designs; but God turned this to the good of his people, and the discouragement of their enemies.

Furthermore, when Balaam was going towards Balak, it is said, God's anger was kindled, because he went^x, though he was permitted to go^y. This doubtless was because of his design to get the money and honour and inclination to curse Israel, which he shewed, by keeping the messengers another night^z, after God had said unto him, *Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people, for they are blessed*^a. It is also said^b, that God would not hearken unto Balaam, but turned the curse into a blessing; which shews Balaam's desire and endeavour to have them cursed. So that it is plain God's anger was kindled because he went, that is, with that intention still, to curse Israel; and although he succeeded not therein, yet he was instrumental, by his wicked counsel in the enticement of a great number of the Israelites, first to commit whoredom with the daughters of the Moabites and Midianites, and then to join with them in the worship of their idol gods^c; which occasioned many to be put to death^d, and

^s Josh. xiii. 22.^t Numb. xxiv. 1.^u Numb. xxiii. 23.^x Numb. xxii. 22.^y Ver. 20.^z Ver. 19.^a Ver. 12.^b Deut. xxiii. 5.^c Numb. xxv. 1,

2, 3, 6.

^d Ver. 4.

twenty-four thousand to die of the plague^e. As for the ass's speaking^f, we may the less wonder at it, when there want not such accounts in Pagan history; such as of a lamb speaking in Egypt, and of an ox crying out, *Rome, beware!* with many like instances out of the gravest and best historians^g.

Thirdly, Moses and Aaron both died before the Israelites entered into the land of Canaan^h, whereon the following reflection may be made, *viz.* that neither the Levitical priesthood, which Aaron executed, nor the Levitical law taught by Moses, can conduct the people of God into the eternal inheritance; but the grace of God, by faith in Jesus, of whom both that priesthood and that law were types and shadows.

CHAP. XIII.

The Manifestation of Christ under the Law.

THE last thing to be noted concerning the Pentateuch is the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ therein, by his being not only shadowed in the law as aforesaid, but in particular foretold by Moses, and typified by the brazen serpent, and, as it were, foreshewn by divers appearances to the patriarchs. In the first place, Moses foretold him, saying unto the children of Israel, *'The Lord thy God shall raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken:* which prophecy the Jews, and many learned Christian interpreters, understood of a promise of succession of prophets after Moses, to prevent the Israelites from having recourse to oracles and diviners, mentioned in the verse before; but the Apostle applies it to the Messiah^k, and so does St. Stephen^l; and therefore it is to be understood primarily of him. Christ, according to the flesh, came of the tribe of Judah, and so was raised from the midst of that people, and of their brethren; and he was like unto Moses, as having taken on him the

^e Numb. xxv. 9. ^f Numb. xxii. 28. ^g Grot. et alii in Numb. xxii. 28. in Pool's Synopsis.

^h Numb. xx. 12. Deut. xxxiv. 1—6.

ⁱ Deut. xviii. 15.

^k Acts iii. 22.

^l Acts vii. 37.

nature of man, and also in giving laws, (which none of the ancient prophets did,) instructing and exhorting to virtue, and foretelling things to come: so again, in being a Mediator between God and man, and a reconciler of the people of God, in doing many wonderful works, and conducting towards the Canaan of heaven. This famous prophecy of Christ was published above one thousand four hundred years beforehand, and it is explained and applied by the Apostle St. Peter^d. And, by the way, this prophecy of Christ's being a prophet and a lawgiver, like unto Moses, plainly manifests his authority to fulfil the old law of Moses, and thereby to make it appear that the shadows of him cease.

Again, as Moses foretold Christ, so the brazen serpent he set up on a pole in the wilderness was a figure of him; for as they which were stung with the fiery serpents were saved from death by looking up to the brazen serpent; so we, looking up by faith to Christ, who was lifted up on the cross, obtain salvation from eternal death^e. So great was the work of our redemption, that it was thus foretold and represented so long before.

Furthermore, the several appearances mentioned in the Pentateuch of God and the Lord, (especially where what we translate *the Lord*, is in the original *Jehovah*, are ascribed by the ancient fathers^f, and many other learned authors, to the second Person in the blessed Trinity. They affirm, that whensoever the divinity vouchsafed a visible appearance, it was by the Logos, or Word, that is, the Son, and that from apostolical tradition, that as God the Father at the first made the world by his Son, so by the same Son he afterwards manifested himself; and that the Apostle intends as much^g, where he intimates that the Israelites tempted Christ in the wilderness^h, particularly that it was by the Son of God the appearance was made to Adam and Eve, by the sheechinah

^d Acts iii. 22. ^e See Numb. xxi. 9. compared with John iii. 14. ^f Justin. Martyr. Apol. i. edit. Grabe, §. 83. p. 122. et Trypho. edit. Jebb. p. 178, and 330. See at large Archbishop Teison on Idolatry, chap. xiv. the five first parts thereof. ^g 1 Cor. x. 9. ^h Dr. Mill's Greek Testament, in loc. and Bishop Bell's Defen. Fid. Nic. chap. i. §. 1.

aforementioned, when they hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God¹. The ancients also further affirm, that the Son was the Lord, who directed the Israelites by the continued shechinah of *a pillar of a cloud by day, and fire by night*^k, and who afterwards vouchsafed that glorious lustre which filled the tabernacle^l. Hence the Apostle, speaking of Christ in his Epistle to the Hebrews^m, expressed himself so as the converted Jews might easily understand him, calling Christ *the brightness of the glory of God*: and when Christ was transfigured, *and his face did shine as the sun*ⁿ, this appearance St. Peter calls *the excellent glory*^o. So he appeared to Stephen, who *saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at his right hand*^p. And so Saul, when he *saw a light above the brightness of the sun*^q.

It is also believed, that when the appearances were not made by the rays of light or flame, as is above mentioned, but in the likeness of angels^r or men, it was the same Son of God who did appear; and that the manner in which the appearance was effected, was by the assumption or taking to him the form of some principal angel, with whom he was in a peculiar manner present, but without personal union, and not by an angel personating God^s; and that this was done as a prelude or essay, and token beforehand of his real incarnation, or taking on him our flesh. Thus the Son was that angel who strove with and blessed the Patriarch Jacob^t, whence Jacob called the name of the place *Peniel*, that is, the face of God, *for I have seen God face to face*^u.

¹ Gen. iii. 8. ^k Exod. xiii. 21. ^l Exod. xl. ^m Chap. i. 3. ⁿ Matt. xvii. 2. ^o 2 Pet. i. 17. ^p Acts vii. 55. ^q Acts ix. 5. and xxvi. 13.

^r Some of the ancient Jews were of the same opinion: Sic Moses Nehemanni filius. (apud Grot. de Ver. lib. v. §. 21.) Iste Angelus, si rem ipsam dicamus, est Angelus redemptor: de quo scriptum est: quoniam nomen meum in ipso est: ille, inquam, Angelus qui ad Jacob dicebat: ego Deus Bethel. Ille, de quo dictum est: et vocabat Mosem Deus de rubo. ^s It has been and is the opinion of some learned men, that Jesus Christ's soul pre-existed before his incarnation, by which they explain his appearance at several times under the first dispensation.

^t Gen. xxxii. ^u See also Exod. iii. 2. Josh. v. 13, 14, 15. and Judg. vi. 11, 14, 16, 21.

It is supposed by some, that at the least, one of those three men who stood by Abraham, Gen. xviii. 2. was the Son of God; but of that see Bishop Patrick on Gen. xviii. 2. and xxii. 22.

Thus far have we given an account of the five books of Moses, called the Pentateuch, *viz.* Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

CHAP. XIV.

The Settlement of the Israelites in Canaan ; with other occurrences in the Books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth.

THE book of Joshua acquaints us how the Israelites, by God's immediate help, under the conduct of Joshua, in the space of seven years, overcame and destroyed the Canaanites, and were themselves settled in the land of Canaan, about nine hundred years after the flood, and four hundred and seventy-seven after the covenant made by God with Abraham their forefather: for from Abraham's receiving the promise, to their going down into Egypt with their father Jacob, was two hundred and fifteen years, and their abode in Egypt two hundred and fifteen years more, their journeying in the wilderness forty, and the wars in Canaan seven, in all four hundred and seventy-seven.

Though the history of the war against the Canaanites be briefly summed up, yet it lasted a long time^x, that is, seven years; for Caleb says, forty-five years had passed from the time the Lord spake concerning him unto Moses, that is, from the time he returned from spying the land, to the distribution of it among the tribes^y. Now of that forty and five years, they wandered thirty-eight years in the wilderness, after they were got to Kadesh-barnea^z; therefore seven years more, to make up the forty-five, was the time of the war; which God might be pleased should continue so long, partly as the wise Jew observes^a, in respect to the old inhabitants themselves, who being chastened by little and little, had place of repentance given them, and also to exercise the faith and patience of his people. And, *lastly*, that the difficulty of the conquest might make them the more sensible of his power and goodness.

^x Josh. xi. 18. ^y Josh. xiv. 6, 10, compared with Numb. xiv. 24. ^z Deut. ii. 14. ^a Wisd. xii. 1—11.

In reading this history, we may observe, *first*, the goodness of God to the Israelites, who had been miserable slaves in Egypt, and made to labour and build houses for others: they themselves are now, in return, possessed of wealth they laboured not for, of houses full of all good things, which they filled not, of vineyards and olive-trees, which they planted not^b. *Secondly*, We see what sin will bring on a wicked nation and people, as the Canaanites were, even to be rooted out and destroyed: their iniquities were now full, and God spared them not; yet still some of the old inhabitants were left, especially the Philistines, a stout people living on the sea-coasts, by whom God exercised the faith and obedience of the Israelites, making those Philistines his scourges, to chasten them when they sinned against him^c. *Thirdly*, We find that the walls of Jericho, the first town the Israelites took after they had passed over Jordan, fell down by a miracle at the priest's blowing the trumpets^d, to manifest God's omnipotent power, and to encourage the people; yet God was pleased they should take the rest by warlike stratagems and fighting^e; thereby instructing us, that he who hath ordained the end, hath for the most part designed the means for attaining that end; and that we should not in general presume on the end, without using the lawful and proper means. *Fourthly*, That the word *Joshua* imports one that saves; and so the very name of the person chosen to conduct the people into Canaan, is of the same signification in the original with our Lord Jesus, whom he represented, and who conducts his church into the Canaan of eternal happiness in heaven.

Lastly, That the sun stood still at the prayer of Joshua^f, as afterwards the shadow was brought ten degrees backwards in the dial of Ahaz^g, so that the whole frame of the heavens was changed, is indeed very miraculous, and so it is acknowledged to be: but as to us, it is no more to be disputed, that he who made the heavens should alter their position, and rectify it again, than that he who makes a clock, should disorder its motion, and be able to set it in order again; (possibly this

^b Deut. vi. 11.

^c Joshua xiii. 2. Judges xxiii. 20, 21, 22, 23, and iii. 12.

^d Josh. vi.

^e Josh. viii. &c.

^f Chap. x.

^g 2 Kings xx.

was effected by shortening the night as much as the day was lengthened :) so that there is no need to suppose with some, both Jews and Christians, either that God placed in the heavens any extraordinary light body representing the sun, or that he kept up the light thereof only by reflection; the prophet represents it as really done^b. However, the Divine Providence so ordered this miraculous effect, that the heavenly bodies constantly move in their natural order, as appears from the calculating the eclipses by the ancient Chaldeans and modern astronomersⁱ.

When the Israelites had passed over Jordan, their chief camp was at Gilgal, in Benjamin's lot, about two miles^k on this side Jordan, and there was the tabernacle of God pitched^l, and the sacrifices offered for about seven years, during their warring against the Canaanites. After that, having rest, they fixed the tabernacle at Shiloh, in the tribe of Ephraim, more in the heart of the country^m, and then the several tribes took possession of their lots. The tabernacle, with the solemn worship and sacrifices, continued to be at Shiloh above three hundred years, till the time of Samuelⁿ.

Note, That the people who came out of Egypt were circumcised; but during their journeying in the wilderness, circumcision was omitted, so that none who were born in the wilderness were circumcised; but circumcision being the seal of God's covenant with them, he was pleased to order it should be renewed when they entered into Canaan^o.

The land of Canaan was divided into twelve parts or tribes, according to the number of Jacob's sons, as hath been already mentioned in the account given of Canaan.

The government^p of the children of Israel was a theocracy, or divine government, that is, Moses, and after him Joshua, ruled them according to God's immediate appointment, from

^b Hab. iii. 11. ⁱ Usser. Annales, A. M. 3291. ^k Dr. Wells's Geography of the Old Testament, vol. ii. ^l Josh. v. 10. ^m Josh. xviii. 1. ⁿ Usser. Annales, A. M. 2560. See Josh. xviii. 1. Judg. xviii. 31. 1 Sam. i. 3. and iv. 3, &c. ^o Josh. v. 1—8. ^p Josephus calls it *Θεοκρατία*, contra Apion. lib. ii. circa dimidium. Hudson, Gr. §. 16. See a large account of this in Dr. Spencer, de Legibus Hebr. ad finem lib. i.

time to time; so that God was truly their King^q, and Moses and Joshua, and after them the Judges, as it were, his deputies or vicegerents; insomuch that when the people made on offer of the government to Gideon, he answered, *I will not rule over you, neither shall my son; the Lord shall rule over you*^r. God, as their King, made them laws and statutes, established with rewards and punishments, to enforce the observance of them, and gave orders and directions in all matters of moment. When the blasphemer was brought before Moses, *they put him in ward, that the mind of the Lord might be shewed them*^s. So again God himself, as King, determined the right of possessing an inheritance to be in the daughters of Zelophehad^t. The orders and directions which God gave to Moses, were given face to face, that is, the voice came to Moses, probably out of the shechinah, or the light and glory aforementioned, in a most familiar and plain manner, as a man speaks to his friend^u; but to Joshua, and others after him, by the oracle of Urim and Thummim, spoken of before, and probably in the manner already mentioned^v. In a word, it pleased God to be an immediate King and Governor over the Israelites, directing their counsels both in peace and war, till in Samuel's time they rejected him, and would have a king over them, like other nations^w. Nay, even afterwards their kings were in a peculiar manner God's deputies: hence Solomon is said to sit on the throne of the Lord^x, and the kingdom of his posterity is called the kingdom of the Lord^a. The chief governors appointed under God were Moses, Joshua, and the Judges.

Besides them, there were seventy men chosen, by God's appointment, out of the elders of the people, that is, the heads of their tribes or families, and the most esteemed among them^b. These seventy were according to the number of the persons of the house of Jacob who were in Egypt at

^q 1 Sam. xii. 12. ^r Judg. viii. 22, 23. See also 1 Sam. viii. 7. ^s Lev. xxiv. 12. ^t Numb. xxvii. 6, 7. See also Judg. xx. 18, 27. ^u Exod. xxxiii. 11. Numb. vii. 8, 9. ^v Maim. apud Ainsworth, in Exod. xxviii. 30. See Numb. xxvii. 5, 6, 21. 1 Sam. xxiii. 9, 10. ^w 1 Sam. viii. 7, 19. ^x 1 Chron. xxix. 23. ^a 2 Chron. xiii. 8. ^b Gen. i. 7. and Exod. iii. 16.

the first, *viz.* the threescore and six that came with Jacob into Egypt, Jacob himself, and Joseph and his two sons, in all, first and last, threescore and ten ^c, and also according to the number of the seventy elders, which went up to the Lord at mount Sinai ^d. These were to be assistants in the government ^e; and this was the rise of the great council, or Sanhedrim ^f, in the commonwealth of Israel, among whom the high-priest bore the chief sway. This great council consisted of seventy-one, as here they were seventy, and Moses their prince, instead of whom was their *nasi*, or president, in after-ages. The assistants chosen before, by the advice of Jethro, had only an inferior power in small concerns ^g, but these had a portion of the spirit of Moses put upon them ^h, and were endued with the same authority in spiritual matters, as well as temporal ⁱ. This order of the council ever after continued among the Jews in great authority, both in matters of church and state ^k; and the place where they sat, was at the temple in Jerusalem, as at first they were to assemble at the tabernacle ^l. It is mentioned in the Gospel, as having great power in our Saviour's time, by the permission of the Romans. This great council chiefly consisted of the Priests and Levites; other persons also of learning and piety might be chosen into it ^m.

The principal causes which came before this great council, besides appeals from other inferior courts, were concerning false prophesying, and idolatry, or else the concerns of a whole tribe. For inferior and private matters of justice between man and man, there were appointed magistrates in every city, called the elders of the city, that is, in such city wherein were one hundred and twenty fathers of families, or more;

^c Gen. xlvi. 26, 27. ^d Exod. xxiv. 1. ^e Numb. xi. 16, 17. ^f So called by the Talmudists, from *συνεδριον*. See for this council, Maimon. apud Ainsworth in Numb. xi. 16. Lightf. Temple, chap. xx. Grot. in Matt. v. 22. ^g Exod. xviii. 17, &c. ^h Numb. xi. 17. ⁱ Talmud. Bab. in Sanhedr. c. i. and Maimon. in Sanhedr. c. i. §. 3, 4, 5. apud Ainsworth on Numb. xi. 16. ^k Gabinius, the Roman president, altered the government for a little time. Joseph. Antiq. book xiv. ch. 10. but Cæsar restored it, Joseph. ib. ch. 17. ^l Numb. xi. 16. ^m Deut. xvii. 8, &c. 2 Chron. xix. 8. Grot. *ibid.* Casaubon. Exercit. 13. ann. 31. num. x. p. 216.

and the numbers of this lesser council, or sanhedrim, were twenty-three: but if the city could not make up one hundred and twenty families, then there were only three Judgesⁿ. Josephus mentions seven magistrates to be in every city^o: but, as Bishop Patrick observes, both he and the Talmudists, before cited by Ainsworth, may speak true, with respect to different times and places; for it cannot but be presumed, that both he and they understood the state of their country in such public matters^p.

The place of these lesser courts was at the gate of each city^q. Hence the unjust rulers were reproved by the prophet^r, because they had turned aside the poor in the gate from their right: and it hath been observed, that the Hebrew *shagnar*, which is the name of a gate, is taken from a word which signifies to esteem, or put an estimate upon things; because of old judgment, or estimation of things, was given out in the gates of the city. Hence also Jeremiah bewailing the destruction of the Jews, amongst other calamities and losses, he complains, *The elders have ceased from the gate*^s.

There lay an appeal from both the two last-mentioned courts in the particular cities, (either that of twenty-three, or that of three magistrates,) to the great sanhedrim, or council at Jerusalem before mentioned, who finally determined all causes^t.

After the death of Joshua, and the elders who outlived him, and who remembered the wonders which God had wrought for Israel, there succeeded a generation who forsook God, and provoked him by their sins, especially their idolatry, after the example of the neighbouring people, in worshipping Baal and Ashtaroth^u. In this time of anarchy and confusion, when every one did that which seemed right in his own eyes,

ⁿ Ainsworth, *ibid.* and compare Bishop Patrick on Deut. xvi. 18. On this account Josephus calls their government an Aristocracy, (as before we observed he called it a Theocracy, as having God for their King and supreme Governor.) *Antiq.* book xi. chap. 4. near the end; and book iv. chap. 8. Gr. §. 17.

^o *Ibid.* Gr. §. 14. ^p Bishop Patrick, *ibid.* ^q Deut. xvi. 18. xvii. 5. and xxi. 19. Josh. xx. 4. Ruth iv. 1.

^r Amos v. 12.

^s Lam. v. 14.

^t Deut. xvii. 8—14.

^u Judges ii. 10—13.

all those disorders are supposed to be committed that are reported in the five last chapters of the book of Judges, which are placed together at the end, that the history of the Judges, which is the chief subject, might not be interrupted.

For the Israelites' sins, God often delivered them into the hands of their enemies, who sorely oppressed them at several times for many years together: but upon their prayers and repentance, God sent or stirred up some extraordinary persons among them, to lead, and defend, and govern the rest under him, having animated them by a secret impulse from heaven, and endued them with the spirit of wisdom and courage^s. These were called Judges, who were as generals of their armies, and had the chief authority^y; but not the supreme and regal power; for all the while God was their King, (as we have seen above;) and it was he who commanded the Judges to feed or to be over his people Israel in his stead^z; so that God himself, at the same time, is said to reign over them^a. We have the history of those Judges, and of their conquests over the Philistines, and other oppressors of the Israelites, in the book of Judges, and the first seven chapters of the first book of Samuel. Here again we may meditate on the provocations of sin, the effects of God's anger, and his goodness and power in delivering his people on their repentance.

There are two passages in the history of the Judges to be more particularly enquired into; the first, concerning Jephtha's vow, *Whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's; and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering. His daughter came out to meet him, and he did with her according to his vow, which he had vowed; and she knew no man.* Some understand it, that his daughter, not being fit for a burnt-offering, was not truly sacrificed, but offered to the Lord, that is, devoted to a state of perpetual

^x 1 Sam. xii. 11. Judges ii. 16, 18. iii. 10. vi. 34. xi. 29. and xiii. 25. ^y Quasi inter reges et dictatores apud Romanos. Grot. in Jud. i. 1. ^z 1 Chron. xvii. 6, 10. ^a 1 Sam. viii. 7. ^b Chap. xi. 31, 32, 39.

virginity; and therefore it is added, that *she knew no man*. However, it was a rash vow; and if he did really sacrifice his daughter, some think it was in imitation of the Amorites, whose gods the Israelites did then worship^c, and amongst others Moloch, to whom they offered their children, as hath been observed before, which was expressly forbidden in the law^d. But this worthy man would scarce imitate such examples: however, his distracting sorrow, shewn by *rending his clothes*, and complaining, *Alas! my daughter, thou hast brought me very low: I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and cannot go back*; and his daughter's consenting that he should do to her accordingly, only requesting a respite for two months, *to bewail her virginity*, or dying unmarried and childless^e, intimates, that he did truly sacrifice his daughter: for it is said, when *at the end of two months she returned unto her father, he did with her according to his vow*^f; which might proceed from his mistaking that passage, ^g*When thou shalt vow unto the Lord, thou shalt not be slack to pay it*; which false persuasion might hurry him on, in honour to God, for the victory: whereas he should have considered, that a vow cannot oblige where the matter is not lawful, honest, and in our power; and therefore, no doubt, he could not be innocent, if he did offer his daughter for a burnt-offering, though he was, in other respects, zealous in doing the work which God appointed him, and in vanquishing the enemies of his people, and is therefore reckoned in the number of the faithful^h. God might permit this action of Jephtha's to be recorded, for a warning against rash vows.

As for the other passage concerning Samson's strength, and his hair, &c. we are to understand, that he was a Nazarite, appointed by God from his birth. The word *Nazarite* signifies *separated*, and devoted to the service and glory of God, that he might save the Israelites out of the hands of the Philistines, who at that time oppressed them. As a token of this separation, and a sign of God's covenant with him, he

^c Judges vi. 10.
^g Deut. xxiii. 21.

^d Lev. xx. 2.
^h Heb. xi. 32.

^e Judges xi. 35, 36, 37.

^f Ver. 39.

was to *drink no wine nor strong drink, and no razor was to come on his head*¹, according to the law of the Nazarites^k. And that he might be enabled for the great work of delivering the Israelites, and overcoming the Philistines, God gave him not only the spirit of courage, as he had done to former judges, but also extraordinary strength of body, above all men besides; so that he rent a roaring lion, as if it had been a kid, and made great slaughter of the Philistines^l. Now, of this wonderful strength, his hair, being preserved, was a sign or token; not that his strength lay in his hair, for that strength was God's gift for the purpose aforementioned; but his hair being a token of his strength, and a sign of God's covenant with him, by complying with his barlot, and suffering it to be cut off, he broke the covenant, and forfeited the spirit of strength and courage, and so was left to his own human weakness, and betrayed to his enemies.

Lastly, As for pulling the house upon and killing himself, it may be there was something of human frailty, in desiring to be *revenged of the Philistines* for the loss of his two eyes; but it is evident, that what he then did, was by an extraordinary instinct of God's Spirit, who, for the destruction of the enemies of his people, renewed his strength so far, as to enable him miraculously to pull down the house, thereby to slay more of them at his death than in his life^m.

Next after the history of the Judges, followeth that of Ruth, which is an appendix, or addition to that of Judges, since the transactions recorded in Ruth happened *in the days when the Judges ruled*ⁿ.

The design is to shew the genealogy of Christ, who, as man, descended from Boaz, one of the posterity of Pharez, the son of Judah, who was one of the twelve sons of Jacob^o.

We have in this book a wonderful series of the Divine Providence, in bringing Boaz, of the tribe of Judah, acquainted with Ruth, who was a Moabitess, from which two the family of David was to proceed: that Ruth, the Moabitess,

ⁱ Judges xiii. 4, 5. ^k Numb. vi. 2-6. ^l Judges xiv. xv. ^m Judges
xvi. 28. ⁿ Ruth i. 8. ^o Gen. xxxviii. 29. Ruth iv. 18, &c.

should be married to one that was a Jew, who came with his father for sustenance into the land of Moab, and who was kinsman of Boaz: that she should be a widow, and childless, and be so far in love with her mother-in-law Naomi, as to leave her own country, and accompany her to Bethlehem in Judæa: that there this Ruth, gleaning after the reapers, to relieve her wants, should light on the servants of Boaz, and so become acquainted with that great man, and at length marry him, and bear him a son, Obed, the grandfather of David, from whom Christ descended after the flesh. Here, besides the wonderful providence of God in effecting his designs, we may observe, that although Boaz was a Jew, and one of the posterity of Abraham, yet Ruth was a Moabitess; and Christ's proceeding from them encourageth us, that *in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, shall be accepted of him.*

The ceremony of *putting off the shoe*, used in redeeming land, and in contracts^z, is thus understood: a man pulling off his shoe, and giving it to his neighbour, signified, that he thereby made over his right of possessing, or going upon that land as an owner of it, to the person to whom he gave his shoe.

CHAP. XV.

The History of the Kings.

THE government of the Judges, which continued somewhat above three hundred years, being expired, we read in the next place the history of the Kings. Samuel, the last of the Judges, who was also a prophet, and had revelations from God^a, being grown old, (and having judged Israel twenty-one years from Eli's death,) took his sons to assist him in the government, whose ill management the Israelites made the pretence for requiring that a king should be given them; whereas the true cause seems to be a fond desire of novelty, together with an imitation of the heathen world, and a distrust of God. At the people's request, God appointed them a king, though with a signification of his displeasure^b. The first was

^z Mentioned Ruth iv. 7. ^a 1 Sam. vii. 15. and iii. 20. ^b 1 Sam. viii. 7.

Saul, and then David, and next his son Solomon, each of whom reigned about forty years^c.

In this part are more especially to be observed, *first*, The Divine Providence in bringing Saul, when seeking after his father's asses, to the prophet Samuel, that he might be informed of God's pleasure to make him king^d. *Secondly*, The rejecting of Saul for disobeying God's commands, utterly to destroy the Amalekites^e. *Thirdly*, God's method in bringing David from the sheepfold to the court, in order to the promoting his design of fitting him for the kingdom, particularly in making him instrumental for the refreshing of Saul, when under the power of an evil spirit, and also in assisting him to slay Goliath, the champion of the Philistines^f. *Fourthly*, Saul's having recourse to the witch at Endor^g, where it is said, that Saul, having *enquired of the Lord*, and receiving no answer after the usual manner, had recourse to a pythoness, or woman *having a familiar spirit*, (who, as Josephus^h and some others fancied, had a power to *call up the ghosts of the dead*;) that he might consult with Samuel, who had been dead some time before, what he should do in his extremity: accordingly she describes him whom she had brought up, to be *an old man covered with a mantle*, whom Saul perceived to be Samuelⁱ, that is, as one of the ancient fathers conceives, a spectre or ghost in Samuel's shape; the Scripture complying with the apprehensions, and common opinions, and expressions of men, as to the appearance of Samuel, and the cunning woman's art of raising him, and his being disquieted thereby, describing things as Saul supposed he saw and understood them, without any consideration of the fact, whether real or no: so the images of things are often called by the name of what they represent, as the magicians' rod, the brazen serpent, &c.^k And what this spirit, personating Samuel, foretold concerning Saul's speedy death, *To-morrow shalt thou and thy son be with me*, or in the state of the dead, was

^c Their story takes up 1 Sam. from chap. viii. 2 Sam. 1 Kings to chap. xii. and all 1 Chron. to 2 Chron. x. ^d 1 Sam. ix. v. ^e Chap. xv. ^f Chap. xvi. xvii. ^g Chap. xxviii. ^h Joseph. Antiq. b. vi. chap. xv. near the beginning. ⁱ 1 Sam. xxviii. 14, &c. ^k Augustini Quæstiones, ex Vet. Test. qu. 27.

doubtless, by God's disposal and permission, to serve some end of his providence: as for the same reason a spirit, though a lying one, was permitted by God to suggest to the prophets what they should declare ^l. Nor is it probable that the prophet Samuel should be really sent to Saul from the dead, when God had denied him any answer by living prophets ^m. *Fifthly*, David's troubles, and the dangers he was in, with the various methods of God's delivering him, till he was advanced to the throne ⁿ. *Sixthly*, His prosperous reign and victories over all his enemies, and his zeal for the honour and service of God, in a thankful return for his mercies ^o; but that prosperity was intermixed with the ravishment of his daughter by one of his sons, that son's murder, and Absalom's rebellion ^p. *Seventhly*, The promise of God to David, not only of a long continuance of his posterity on the throne, but also that he would *establish the throne of his kingdom for ever* ^q, that is, that Christ, the eternal King of heaven, should, as man, proceed from him. *Eighthly*, David's zeal in making great preparation for the building of a temple, or *house of God*, of which he had, by inspiration, *the pattern* ^r, as Moses had for the tabernacle ^s; but because he had *shed blood, and made great wars*, God forbid him to build it, but reserved the building of it for his son Solomon, in whose days there should be peace ^t. Hereby it seems ^u, that by shedding blood, though in a just war, David contracted some pollution, which rendered him unfit for building the temple. *Ninthly*, The succeeding of his son Solomon in the kingdom, whom God blessed with extraordinary wisdom, honour, and success ^v. *Lastly*, The building of the temple on mount Moriah in Jerusalem, where Abraham designed to sacrifice his son ^w, whereas in times past there was only the tabernacle aforementioned.

The chief parts of the temple were the same with the tabernacle already described. Two reasons are assigned for the choice of this mount Moriah, on which the temple was built ;

^l 1 Kings xxii. 22. ^m 1 Sam. xxviii. 6. ⁿ 1 Sam. xviii. &c. ^o 2 Sam. ii. &c. 1 Chron. xi. &c. ^p 2 Sam. xiii, xiv, xv. ^q 2 Sam. vii. 13. ^r 1 Chron. xxviii. 12, 19. ^s Exod. xxv. 40. ^t 1 Chron. xxii. 2, 3, 7, 8, 9. ^u Grot. de Jure Bel. lib. ii. cap. xxiv. §. 10. and note *ibid*. ^v 1 Kings i. ^w 2 Chron. iii. 1.

the one, because it was the place God had appointed for Abraham's sacrificing of his son ^t, which was a type of Christ's offering himself a sacrifice for the sins of the world, by virtue of which the temple-sacrifices were acceptable; the other, because there God accepted David's sacrifice, and manifested it by fire from heaven ^a.

King Solomon in seven years finished this stately temple, and with great magnificence celebrated the dedication of it; at which time God gave a visible sign of his presence and favour, (as he had done when the tabernacle was dedicated ^b;) by the shechinah, or glory, (of which before,) that filled the house, and a fire from heaven consuming the sacrifices. This came to pass in the four hundred and forty-seventh year after the Israelites entered into Canaan ^c. Now was the state of Israel in the height of its splendour and glory, whether we consider the solemnity of their religious worship in the temple; the wisdom and royal majesty of their king ^d; the extent of his dominions, *over all kingdoms, from the river Euphrates unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the borders of Egypt* ^e; the magnificence of his court ^f; the riches and flourishing of the people ^g, for the most part of his reign, which lasted about forty years.

Before we proceed, it may be proper to take notice of the vast sums of money mentioned in the history of the Jews, especially of David and his son Solomon. When David conquered the kingdom of Edom, he thereby became master of two sea-port towns on the Red Sea, or Arabian Gulph, (*viz.* Eloth and Esiongeber, which then belonged to that kingdom ^h, from whence Solomon maintained a great traffic for gold to Ophir, which, Josephus says, is what is since called *the golden land* ⁱ, and that, by the assistance of skilful Tyrian pilots and mariners, whom Hiram, king of Tyre, (being a friend and

^z Gen. xxii. ^a 1 Chron. xxi. 26. and 2 Chron. iii. 1. ^b Exod. xl. 34, 35. Lev. ix. 23, 24. ^c For this see 1 Kings vi, vii, viii. 2 Chron. v, vi, vii. ^d 1 Kings iii. 13. and 1 Chron. xxix. 25. ^e 1 Kings iv. 21. ^f 1 Kings iv. 22, 23. ^g Ver. 25. ^h 2 Sam. viii. 14. compared with 1 Kings ix. 26. ⁱ Joseph. Antiq. book viii. chap. 2. [Gr. lib. viii. c. vi. §. 4.] supposed to be the Aurea Chersonesus of the ancients. Compare Baudrand's Geogr. sub voce Ophir.

ally,) had sent; so that in one voyage there were brought to Jerusalem *four hundred and twenty talents of gold*; a most immense sum, however computed ^k; insomuch that it *made silver in Jerusalem to be as stones for plenty*^l, which profitable traffic was after carried on, more or less, with some interruptions ^m;) from David's conquest of the Edomites, for about three generations, till the reign of Ahaz, when the sea-ports above mentioned, and the East India trade therewith, fell into the hands of the Syrians ⁿ.

After all this glory and wealth, and zeal for the true God, we have, in the following account, a sad instance of human frailty, and the corruption of our nature, in Solomon's revolting to idolatry. This wise and great man, contrary to the caution given ^o, took him wives of the Moabites and Ammonites, and other strange women, who *turned away his heart after other gods*: wherefore *the Lord stirred up an adversary* unto him, Jeroboam, his servant; the effect of which was the rending of ten tribes from the house and family of David, and his son Solomon; for after his death ten tribes, taking offence at Rehoboam, Solomon's son, revolted from him, and chose Jeroboam their king. This was by the permission and the disposal of God: so the prophet Ahijah had foretold to Jeroboam, *God will give ten tribes to thee*^p. And another prophet, Shemaiah, declared, in the name of God, *this thing is from me*^q. In 1 Kings xi. 27, and 40, we read the occasion of Jeroboam's being *an adversary* to Solomon, or of *lifting up his hand against his master*; which was yet an effect of the Divine Providence for the accomplishing of God's purposes. It seems that Solomon had set this Jeroboam as a surveyor over his new buildings at Millo, and observing him to be capable and industrious, further favoured and preferred him. But probably hearing (some way or other) of what the prophet Ahijah had foretold, and, it may be, of some secret conspiracy of Jeroboam, was contriving to put him to death: upon which Jeroboam fled into Egypt till Solomon's death, and then returning to his accomplices, was established in one

^k 1 Kings ix. 26, 27, 28. ^l 1 Kings x. 27. ^m 2 Kings viii. 20. and xii. 22.
ⁿ 2 Kings xvi. 6. ^o Exod. xxxiv. 16. ^p 1 Kings xi. 31. ^q 1 Kings xii. 24.

part of the kingdom^r. But the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin still adhered to Rehoboam, Solomon's son; so the kingdom was divided^s: the part that adhered to Rehoboam was called *the kingdom of Judah*; the other, *the kingdom of Israel*. The capital or chief city of Judah was Jerusalem; and that of Israel was at first Shechem^t, and then Tirzah^u. Afterwards the royal seat was, by king Omri, removed to Samaria, being the head city of the tribe of Ephraim^x. This continued to be the regal city of Israel, till a period was put to that kingdom; whence the prophets by Samaria and Ephraim often mean the kingdom of Israel^y; as by Judah, and the house of David, and Jerusalem, and Sion, they describe the kingdom of Judah.

As for the Priests and Levites, that were dispersed in cities up and down the whole land, and whose business was to instruct the people in the law, and officiate at Jerusalem, and for that cause, no doubt, were *cast off* by Jeroboam; they did not revolt from the house of David, but resorted to Rehoboam at Jerusalem; as did also some few out of every tribe, induced by their example^z.

From their entrance into Canaan to this division, it was four hundred seventy and six years.

In reading the history of these kings of Judah and Israel, we are to compare the books of Chronicles with those of Kings; because we find in the Chronicles some circumstances mentioned, which are omitted in the books of Kings. The reader will also be much assisted in having a more distinct notion of the particulars of this history, by comparing therewith the first book of the first part of Dean Prideaux's Old and New Testament connected.

After the division above mentioned, Jeroboam king of Israel, considered, that if his people should go, as they formerly used, to offer their sacrifices at Jerusalem, which belonged to the king of Judah, they might be taken with the magnificence of the temple, and sacrifices there performed,

^r 1 Kings xii. ^s 1 Kings xi. xii. ^t 1 Kings xii. 25. ^u 1 Kings xiv. 17.
and xvi. 8. ^x 1 Kings xvi. 23, 24, 29. ^y Isa. vii. 8, 9, and xi. 13.
Hos. v. 9. and viii. 5. and ix. 3. ^z 2 Chron. xi. 13, 14, 15, 16.

and by degrees turn again to that king; so he ordered other places of worship, and other priests, and caused the people to commit idolatry, by the two images or golden calves which he set up, (like the idols of the Egyptians, among whom he had lately been ^a, whose chief god was Osiris, whom they worshipped in the shape of a bull :) one of these golden calves he placed in Dan, the utmost city northward; the other in Bethel, the utmost bound of his kingdom southward ^b. But, that the innovation might appear the less strange, he retained the law of Moses, so far as consisted with his own scheme of government. Nor indeed does it appear, that Jeroboam had any design to cast off the true God of Israel, which brought them out of the land of Egypt; for he continued the like feasts and ways of worship which were at Jerusalem ^c, and therefore Jehu, one of his successors, pretended a *zeal for the Lord* (Jehovah ^d) in destroying Baal, (which was an idol or false god,) although he still maintained the golden calves; which therefore they seem to have looked upon as symbols and representations of the true God; and yet such worship was no better than idolatry in God's esteem ^e, it being a representing God as a creature, and like ourselves. This accursed policy of keeping the Israelites from going to Jerusalem, by paying their worship at Dan and Bethel, was continued by the following kings of Israel; which is called often *the sin of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin*, and is charged on them as downright idolatry, and making to themselves *other gods* ^f.

Although God was much provoked by this people's idolatry in the golden calves, and afterwards in worshipping Baal, (which Ahab brought from the Zidonians, when he married Jezebel, the daughter of their king ^g;) yet such was the goodness of God, that he still owned them, sent them prophets, and directed and delivered them ^h.

The history of these two kingdoms, and the wars between

^a 1 Kings xi. 40. ^b 1 Kings xii. 26, &c. See the Map. ^c 1 Kings xii. 32.
^d 2 Kings x. 16. ^e See what is said before of the golden calf set up by Aaron
in the wilderness. ^f 1 Kings xiv. 9. ^g 1 Kings xvi. 31, 32. ^h See
1 Kings xviii. 22. 2 Kings iii. 16, &c. and iv. 16, 17. and xiii. 13, 14, &c.

them, with the many dreadful slaughters made thereby, as also their calamities occasioned by their neighbouring kings, we have in 1 Kings xii. and so on to chap. xvii. of the second book of Kings, and in 2 Chron. x. to xxix. where it appears, that this division was the cause of most of the evils which afterwards befel them; occasioning their warring against and preying on each other, till they all, sooner or later, became a prey to other people, against which their mutual agreement and united forces might have secured them.

It is observable, that many of the kings of Israel came to the throne by violence, and not by rightful succession; whereas the kings of Judah, being the posterity of David, all reigned by right of inheritance, each king succeeding his father in the throne, according to God's promise to David, that he would set up his seed after him^l. Amongst the kings of Judah, these six, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Azariah, Jotham, Hezekiah, and Josiah, were religious; all the rest idolaters. Of all the kings of Israel, only Jehoram and Jehu are noted to have done some good, in destroying the image of Baal.

As we read this history, we may make the following reflections: *first*, How great was the apostacy and impiety of some of those kings and people, after all the mighty works God had wrought for them, ever since their fathers came out of Egypt! insomuch that when Rehoboam *had established the kingdom, he forsook the law of the Lord, and all Israel with him*^k. And the prophet Elijah complained unto God, *The children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, and thrown down thine altar, and slain thy prophets*: nay, he thought that himself was the only person left of all God's prophets and servants, and they sought his life also. Manasseh, one of the later kings of Judah before their captivity, seems to have taken up a resolution, even to destroy the very name of the true God, and his service, from off the earth, and to establish idolatry, though he repented before his death^m. *Lastly*, Whosoever reads 2 Kings xxiii. 4, to 15, would

^l 2 Sam. vii. 12.^k 2 Chron. xii. 1.^l 1 Kings xix. 10.^m 2 Kings

xxi. 2, &c. and xxii. 8, &c.

suspect that the people had even received the idols of all nations to worship them: and therefore no wonder God was so incensed against them, as we read he wasⁿ. Yet we find that in those general apostasies, many were preserved by God from the evil of the times, though they durst not openly profess him; so he tells Elijah, *Yet have I left me seven thousand in Israel, which have not bowed unto Baal*^o.

In the second place, we may, in reading this history, reflect on the justice of God shewn upon wicked kings and people, and his favours to the good; the many troubles of his servants; and how he delivered them by his power, ordaining all things for the good of his church and people: and likewise punishing all those who neglected his service, and provoked him by their sins.

Although the law had been much neglected during the reigns of the idolatrous kings, yet copies thereof must have been in many hands, there being divers in the most corrupt times who did not forsake the service of the true God: and the people who cleaved thereto were enjoined a constant daily study in the divine laws^p. Moreover the priests, who were very numerous, and were to be teachers and interpreters of the law, must have each of them at least one copy for that purpose, or, however, many copies amongst them all. The book which Hilkiyah the high-priest found in the reign of Josiah, at the reading whereof the king is represented to be so much astonished^q, is no objection against this. The case appears to be thus: Moses had ordered that the book of the law, which himself had wrote, should be put and kept on the side of the ark, in the holy of holies^r; which book, it seems, was in after-ages hid elsewhere, in some other part of the temple, lest it should be destroyed by the idolatrous princes: and when Josiah had appointed Hilkiyah to see the temple repaired, it was then found, and sent to the king. And no wonder that the divine laws, which had been so neglected, and were now found written by Moses's own hand, should exceedingly move so tender and well-inclined a prince.

ⁿ 2 Kings xxiii. 26, &c. ^o 1 Kings xix. 18. ^p Deut. vi. 7. ^q 2 Kings xxiii. ^r Deut. xxxi. 26, &c.

Lastly, It is remarkable, that, although the Assyrians had been for the main the chief lords of Asia, in which part of the world Canaan did lie; yet the Israelites lived undisturbed by them, till after the division of their kingdom, and increase of idolatry among them: and then they were sorely distressed by the Assyrian and Chaldean monarchs; as we shall see in the remaining part of their history.

After these two kingdoms had continued about two hundred and thirty-five years, God was highly offended by the idolatries and other sins of that part which made up the kingdom of Israel, (being ten tribes;) and having in vain oftentimes forewarned them by his prophets, he punished them in the first place on the following occasion: Ahaz, king of Judah, being in distress, because Rezin, king of Damascus in Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, had joined in a confederacy against him, he sent to Arbaces, who was also called Tiglathpileser, king of Assyria^s, for aid against those two confederate kings. Tiglathpileser, accepting the invitation, and having slain Rezin, marched against Pekah, king of Israel.

But this was from God; for he is said to *stir up the spirit of Tiglathpileser*, king of Assyria, to subdue and carry away captive into his own country a great number of the subjects of the kingdom of Israel, who inhabited beyond Jordan, and in part of Galilee'. The Jews also affirm, that the Assyrians at that time took away the golden calf which was in Dan^u. And about nineteen years afterwards, (or two hundred and fifty-four years in the whole, from the first establishment of the separate kingdom of Israel,) upon their further provocations, it pleased God to permit Shalmaneser (being the next king of Assyria to the forementioned, and also his son) to put an end to the kingdom of Israel.

It seems Shalmaneser had been offended, because he understood that Hosea, then king of Israel, and who had been tributary to him, entered into a secret treaty with the king of Egypt, and neglected the yearly present, or tribute, (with

^s Dean Prideaux's Connection, part i. book 1. sub an. 739.
29. and 1 Chron. v. 26.

^u Dr. Pocock on Hosea viii. 6. p. 402.

^t 2 Kings xv.

a design, no doubt, to throw off his subjection;) upon which he besieged Samaria, the head city of the kingdom of Israel, and took it; whereby the kingdom of Israel was extinct, and the greatest part of the people thereof were led into captivity, and dispersed into strange countries, as of the Medes and Parthians. Shalmaneser also took away their other golden calf which was in Bethel, as the Jews say^x; whereby Hosea's prophecy was fulfilled; ^y *Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off*; (could not uphold thee, as being no God:) and, ^z *The calf of Samaria shall be broken in pieces*. However, it seems some of the kingdom of Israel were left in their own country; but even the most part of these, about forty-four years after, were also carried captive into Assyria by Esarhaddon, (otherwise called Asnapper,) then king of Assyria; whence the body of them never returned^a; whereby was fully completed the captivity of Israel, and the prophecy of Isaiah, ^b *Within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people*, that is, from the beginning of the reign of Ahaz, which was sixty-five years before this time.

We have no certain account of this people's state and fortune afterwards. Josephus, writing the History of the Jewish Wars, somewhat above forty years after our Saviour's passion, gives us the speech of Agrippa to the Jews, in which he exhorted them to submit to the Romans, "unless," says he, "you flatter yourselves with hopes of assistance from your countrymen, the Adiabeniens, on the other side of the Euphrates; but supposing they could be guilty of such an oversight, the Parthians themselves," to whom it seems they were subject, "would not countenance a war against the Romans^c." The same author, mentioning the Jews' return from the Babylonian captivity, adds^d, "but the Israelites chose rather to continue in that country; and this is the reason, that there are only two tribes to be found in Asia and Europe subject to the Romans: as for the other ten tribes, they are,

^x Pocock, *ibid.* ^y Hos. viii. 5. ^z Hos. viii. 6. ^a 2 Kings xvii. See
Usser. *Annal.* A. M. 3327. ^b Isa. vii. 8. ^c Joseph. Wars, book ii. chap. 16.
towards the end of Agrippa's speech. ^d Joseph. *Antiq.* book xi. chap. 5. near
the beginning. [Gr. §. 2.]

even to this day, planted beyond the Euphrates, and prodigiously increased in number." St. Jerom, who lived some considerable time in the eastern parts, about the year of Christ 403, assures us, that "even to this day," in his time, "the ten tribes, which were called Israel, were inhabiting in the mountains and cities of the Medes and Persians, having never been dismissed from their captivity^d." And in the twelfth century, (or between the eleventh and twelfth hundred years of Christ,) Benjamin the Jew, who travelled into many countries, on purpose to know the state and abode of those who were of the posterity of Abraham, informs us, that there were four tribes of the Israelites residing in cities, on the mountains of Nibson in Persia, *viz.* of Dan, Zebulon, Asher, and Naphtali^e. We are also informed of great numbers of Israelites in China and the Indies, who are not called Jews, but own themselves to be Israelites, and are said not so much as to know the name of Jews, though they profess the same religion with them, and own the books of the Old Testament^f.

Which is a good argument that those who reside there are the posterity of the ten tribes; forasmuch as the name of Jews was imposed on the people of the kingdom of Judah, upon their return from the Babylonian captivity, as we shall see afterwards. Upon this dispersion of the ten tribes, other people of the subjects of the king of Assyria were brought in exchange to possess their country, namely, from Babylon, and Cuthah, and Hamath, and Sepharvaim^g.

These strangers placed themselves in the city of Samaria, and the country round about it, (being the seats of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh^h. As for the more northern parts, or Galilee, that is believed to have been still inhabited by some of the Israelites, after the generality of the ten tribes were carried away: for some made their escape, or hid themselvesⁱ; others were old, sick, and infirm. We also read of some of the ten tribes in their own land in the days of Josiah^k, *viz.*

^d Hieron. on Ezek. xxvii. 15. and on Hos. i. 8. ^e Itin. p. 172. ^f Varenius

de Diver. Gentium Religionibus, prope Initium, p. 238. which account he collected from missionaries, and other travellers. ^g 2 Kings xvii. 24. ^h 2 Kings xvii. 24.

ⁱ 2 Chron. xxx. 6. ^k 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6, 9.

Manasseh, Ephraim, and the remnant of Israel. Besides, the zeal which the Galileans had for the Jewish religion, and their language, differing only in a dialect and tone¹, makes it seem probable that they were the remains of the Israelites, with Samaritans mixed with them: but the country of Samaria, the chief part of the kingdom of Israel, was inhabited by those strangers aforementioned, whom the Assyrians had sent thither, (among whom those few remnants of the Israelites were esteemed as nothing.)

These were called Cuthites, or Cutheans, because a great part of them came from Cuthah^m, which is a country of Persia, there being a river of that name, as Josephus informs usⁿ. And because, when they came to inhabit the lands of the kingdom of Israel, they seized on the chief city thereof, *viz.* Samaria, and also the country of the same name, they were also called Samaritans.

Now when these strangers were settled in Israel, they continued their old idol worship which they had observed in their own country; upon which God sent lions among them: hereupon, since they thought every country had its proper god^o, they desired to be instructed in the religion and worship of the God of Israel, according to the law of Moses; whence they partly worshipped the true God, and partly their idols^p. But for a considerable time before Christ, these Samaritans were brought off from their old heathen impieties, and worshipped the true God only, as we shall see afterwards^q.

When the Jews, in after-times, were prosperous, these Samaritans would always pretend a relation to them, and that they came from the patriarch Jacob as well as the Jews^r:

¹ Lightf. Centur. Chorograph. in Matt. viii. ^m 2 Kings xvii. 24. ⁿ Antiq. b. ix. ch. 14. near the present Susiana, within the limits of Persia. Dr. Wells's Geograph. Hist. of the Old Testament, vol. iii. chap. 4. ^o See 2 Kings xviii. 33, 34.

^p We read the story of the captivity of Israel, and the planting of those strangers or Samaritans, in 2 Kings xvii. But the Jews observe, that the priest, who was sent to them, instructed them only in the law of Moses, whence they owned only the Pentateuch: the Canon of holy Scripture, comprehending the rest, being completed by Esdras, (after the return from the Babylonian captivity,) which the Samaritans' hatred of the Jews hindered them from receiving. Hottinger Thesaurus, lib. i. cap. 1.

^q In chap. xx. ^r See an instance in John iv. 12.

perhaps they so pretended, because some Jews came in time to mix with those strangers; particularly by the schism occasioned at the building of the temple on mount Gerizim, about one hundred and twenty-two years after the return from the Babylonian captivity; of which afterwards. But when the Jews were in trouble and danger, then the Samaritans disowned them, and declared themselves to be foreigners and strangers. There was always a great hatred between the Jews and these Samaritans ^s.

Thus we have seen the end of the kingdom of Israel. Now the other kingdom mentioned before, *viz.* of Judah, consisting of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, though they were often oppressed, by God's permission, for their sins, yet continued in some measure an hundred and fifteen years after the destruction of the former kingdom of Israel by Shalmaneser ^t. At length God being still provoked, notwithstanding many warnings of his prophets, by their idolatry, and other wickedness, both of kings and people, decreed, to *remove Judah also out of his sight*, or, as it is expressed ^u, *to stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab*; that is, dealing with them by the same measure, utterly to destroy Jerusalem and the whole kingdom of Judah, as he had done that of Israel, and Samaria, the chief city thereof; and as he had threatened to do from the first time they had settled in Canaan ^v.

Which God was pleased to bring to pass, by making use of the following occasion. The Babylonians under Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, (who was also king of Assyria ^y;) having, with the assistance of the Medes, destroyed Nineveh, the seat-royal of the ancient monarchs of Assyria, and being become formidable, raised the jealousy of Pharaoh-necho, king of Egypt, so far as to give a check to their greatness, and make war against them; to which purpose he was obliged to march through part of the country of the Jews. Josiah, king of Judah, (whether in defence of his own country, or by rea-

^s John iv. 9. ^t For which see 2 Kings xviii. to xxiii. and 2 Chron. xxix. to xxxvi. ^u 2 Kings xxi. 13. ^x Deut. xxviii. 33, &c. ^y As he is styled, 2 Kings xxiii. 29.

son of an alliance with, or subjection to, the Assyrians, it is not mentioned,) attempting to stop him in this expedition, was slain in the valley of Megiddo^z, which occasioned sore lamentations: but, alas! a greater calamity was near; for after this, Necho proceeded with such success, that he brought all Syria, with the Jews' land, in subjection under him^a; upon which, Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, being old, (about a year before his death,) made his son Nebuchadnezzar a partner in the kingdom of Babylon^b, and sent him with an army, first against the Egyptians, (who were in possession of their conquests about Euphrates,) whom he subdued; and then against the Jews. And now the time approaching for the captivity, God sent Jeremiah to forewarn them, but without effect; and Jehoiakim, king of Judah, (doing evil, as others had done^c;) was delivered into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, who *bound him in fetters, to carry him to Babylon*^d. But, it seems, upon his submission, he was left in his own house; where he lived in subjection to the Babylonians, and became tributary for three years^e. The king of Babylon also ordered much of the rich vessels and furniture of the temple, and many of the young Jewish nobility, to be carried into Babylon; among whom was Daniel^f. From this entering of the king and people into the subjection and service of Nebuchadnezzar, and the carrying away captive of the chief among them, are the seventy years of the Babylonian captivity reckoned, which were foretold by the prophet^g. But Jehoiakim still continued unreformed^h, and more provoked God against him. And after three years of submission to Nebuchadnezzar, (upon the credit of a rumour, that the Egyptian king was again advancing in an expedition against the king of Babylon, as Josephus thinksⁱ, and as we may conceive^k;) endeavoured to free himself from subjection:

^z 2 Kings xxiii. 29, 30. and 2 Chron. xxxv. 20, &c. ^a Joseph. Antiq. b. x. cap. 6, 7. Usser. Annal. A. M. 3399. ^b Berosus apud Joseph. Antiq. lib. x. cap. 11. near the end, where he is called Nabuchodonosor. Vide Usser. *ibid.* A. M. 3397. ad an. 4001. ^c 2 Kings xxiii. 37. ^d 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6. ^e 2 Kings xxiv. 1. ^f 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7. Dan. i. 6. ^g Jer. xxv. 11. ^h 2 Chron. xxxvi. 5. ⁱ Antiq. book x. chap. 7. ^k 2 Kings xxiv. 7.

but being forsaken by God for his incorrigibleness, the king of Babylon (or, as it is expressed, *the Lord*) sent against him another army, raised out of the neighbouring countries, then subject to the Babylonians, as the Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites, Ammonites, who laid waste the country of the Jews¹; and *the dead body of king Jehoiakim* (after eleven years' reign^m) *was cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem*, as it was foretoldⁿ, though in respect to the common law of nature, it is said, that *he slept with his fathers*^o.

After this, Jehoiachin, son of Jehoiakim, called also Conias and Jeconias, succeeded his father, and, like him, *did evil in the sight of the Lord*^p. He also, after three months, was made prisoner to the king of Babylon, and a greater spoil was made in Jerusalem and the temple; great treasures being taken out of both, and carried to Babylon; and king Jehoiachin, with many thousands more of the chiefest persons, were carried captive thither^q. Nebuchadnezzar, before his departure, made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king, and changed his name to Zedekiah, (which name signifies *the justice of God*, which had appeared in punishing the rebellion of Jehoiakim; and which probably Nebuchadnezzar designed to admonish him also of, if he should rebel, and to caution him beforehand of the effects of divine justice.) Notwithstanding this, Zedekiah, having, like the former kings, forfeited God's protection by his evil deeds^r, in the ninth year of his reign, revolted from the king of Babylon, relying on the assistance of the king of Egypt, (contrary to the advice of Jeremiah^s.) Whereupon Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, with his army, once more came against Jerusalem, the head city of the kingdom of Judah, and besieged it; where the people suffered a miserable famine, and many other calamities. At length, after a year and a half's siege, *the city was broken up*, and king Zedekiah, with his people, fled out of it by night; but, being pursued, was taken, his children slain before his face, and then, his own eyes being put out, he was

¹ 2 Kings xxiv. 1, 2. ^m 2 Chron. xxxvi. 5. ⁿ Jer. xxii. 18, 19. and xxxvi. 30. ^o 2 Kings xxiv. 6. ^p 2 Kings xxiv. 9. ^q 2 Kings xxiv. 8—17. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9. ^r 2 Kings xxiv. 19. ^s Jer. xxxvii. 6, &c.

carried in chains into Babylon¹. So that what God had threatened by the prophet Ezekiel, was fulfilled upon him, "*My net will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare: and I will bring him to Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there.*" This was the end of the race of David, after one and twenty kings in succession, in the space of four hundred and sixty-seven years, from David's being anointed the first time in Hebron, upon the news of Saul's death².

Shortly after, the city of Jerusalem, the king's houses that were therein, and the famous temple of Solomon, were all laid in ashes, and the walls of the city broken down by Nebuzaradan, captain of the guards to Nebuchadnezzar. The rest of the people that escaped the sword were all carried captive into Babylon, except a few poor vine-dressers and husbandmen, over whom the king of Babylon made Gedaliah ruler; and even they, soon after, upon the murder of Gedaliah, fled away into Egypt³.

This came to pass eight hundred and sixty-three years after their entrance into Canaan, eighteen years after their first captivity under Jehoiakim, and one hundred and thirty-three years after the ruin of the kingdom of Israel by Shalmaneser.

About seventeen years afterwards, Nebuchadnezzar, taking the advantage of great discords amongst the Egyptians, invaded Egypt in a very furious manner⁴, and among others slew most of those Jews who had fled thither: and those who escaped the sword, he carried captive into Babylon, (according as the prophets had foretold⁵;) from whence, no doubt, they, or their posterity, returned into their own land at the end of the captivity.

Here we may make three remarks: the *first*, That possibly Nebuchadnezzar's chief aim in carrying so many captives into Babylon, was to supply that great city with inhabitants; but God used him as an instrument to effect his own designs.

¹ 2 Kings xxv. 1, &c. ² Ezek. xii. 13. ³ 2 Sam. ii. 4. ⁴ 2 Kings xxv. 2 Chron. xxxvi. ⁵ Herodot. apud Usser. Ann. A. M. 3430, ad 3434. and Joseph. Antiq. book x. chap. 11. near the middle. ⁶ Jer. xliii. 8, &c. and xlv. 27, 28. and Ezek. xxix. xxx. and xxxi.

The *second*, That when God had given up the Jews to destruction, for their obstinate continuance in their impieties, he likewise gave them up to such a blindness and infatuation, as even to provoke the Babylonians to finish their ruin; which it does not seem they intended at the first to do. Thus as Jehoiakim, being made tributary, after three years attempted his freedom by a mistaken reliance on the Egyptian king, to the procurement of his own ruin; so his son Jehoiachin, by the same means, brought farther mischief on himself and country: and at length Zedekiah, by a fresh provocation of the Babylonians, occasioned their completing the destruction of himself and people, with the city and temple. The *third* remark is, That although God did bear with that people with much patience, and often forewarned them by his prophets; yet at last he exactly fulfilled all that he had threatened, at the time when he first made a covenant with king Solomon and his seed. *° If thou wilt keep my statutes, there shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel: but if you shall at all turn from following me, and go and serve other gods, then will I cut off Israel out of the land; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, &c.* Nor was it the least aggravation of the calamity of the Jews, that although their return was foretold by the prophets, yet it was not to be till after seventy years from the beginning of their thralldom; so that their captivity was to last the age of man, threescore and ten years; and very few, if any, then living, who were carried away at first, and not very many of the rest who were captives afterwards, could hope to see the end of their servitude. However, God vouchsafed them a promise by his prophets, of a return for them or their children, and great peace and prosperity afterwards^c.

Note, The Chaldeans and Babylonians were for the main all one people, and are called in holy Scripture sometimes by one name, and sometimes by another: Chaldea or Babylonia

^b 1 Kings ix. 4, &c.

^c Isa. xiv. Jer. xxxiii. Ezek. xxviii. 35, &c. and xxxvi.

is the name of the country, and the people are called Babylonians from Babylon, the head city of that country ^d.

Whilst the Jews were under captivity, the order of the priesthood was preserved, and they had a sort of governors among themselves, *viz.* the *chief of the fathers, rulers of the congregation, and heads of the captivity*, by the permission of the government they were under ^e.

We read of no other people planted in Judæa; so that it remained *desolate*, and *kept sabbath*, or had rest all the time the Jews were captive in Babylon ^f, as it had been threatened of old ^g, and foretold by the prophet Jeremiah ^h.

For the better understanding of which, we may note, That one part of the law was for the due observance of the *sabbatical* year, *viz.* that every seventh year the land should have rest: they were then not to till their ground, nor sow any seed, nor prune their vineyards, nor reap, nor look on any thing that grew in any of their land, as peculiarly theirs; but all that grew of its own accord (without tilling or sowing) should be esteemed as common to the poor, and every one besides ⁱ.

This might be ordained in memory of the creation of the world in six days, and God's resting on the seventh: it also obliged them to a reliance on the Divine Providence for the seventh year's maintenance; and plainly shewed, that, however God gave them the land of Canaan, yet himself still continued the chief Lord or Proprietor of it; and therefore this rest is called a *sabbath for the Lord* ^k, that is, unto his honour, or as a sign of homage unto him. This command, through contempt and covetousness, being broken, God punished the inhabitants as he had threatened to do, proportionably to their sins: that is, drove them among the idolatrous heathen for their idolatry, and made their land to lie desolate, and to have its rest, which themselves would not allow in obedience to his command.

^d Ezra v. 12.

^e Ezra i. 5. and x. 14. Nehem. xii. 31. and Haggai i. 1.

^f 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21.

^g Lev. xxvi. 34, 35, 43.

^h Jer. xxv. 9, 10, 11.

ⁱ Exod. xxiii. 10, &c. Lev. xxv. 2, &c.

^k Lev. xxv. 4.

Furthermore, the captivity and dispersion of Israel served other ends of Providence, besides their punishment, and the cure of their idolatry; for into what country soever they were carried and dispersed, they carried the knowledge of the true God, the God of Israel, along with them; and although such knowledge did not reform nations, yet it made a great many private converts to the worship of the true God. So^l we read of such converts or proselytes of many nations, who came to worship the true God at Jerusalem: of such there were in Greece a *great multitude*^m. Such a one was the Roman centurion Corneliusⁿ, and the eunuch^o. These were called in the gospel-times *devout men*, or worshipping^p Greeks, and are often mentioned in the New Testament; whereby they were prepared to receive the Gospel, when it was preached to them.

Thus much for the captivity, both of those of the kingdom of Israel, and of the kingdom of Judah.

CHAP. XVI.

The Return of the Jews from the Babylonian Captivity.

AT length, after the seventy years' captivity, God, by his providence, brought to pass the release of such as were living of the kingdom of Judah, according as he had foretold by his prophets^a; for Cyrus the Persian, foretold by name^b, (two hundred and ten years before he was born, according to Josephus^c;) conquered the Babylonians, under whom the Jews were captives, and released the Jews. For the better understanding of which remarkable history, we may first observe, that Astyages, king of the Medes, had two children, *viz.* a son, Cyaxares the second, (who succeeded him,) and a daughter, Mandane, whom he married to Cambyses, king of Persia^d; and these two last mentioned (Cambyses and

^l Acts ii. 9, &c. ^m Acts xvii. 4. ⁿ Acts x. 1, 2. ^o Acts viii. 27.
^p Συθαρινοι. ^a Isa. xiii. xiv. Jer. xxix. 10. and for which we may read 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23. and the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. ^b Isa. xliv. 28. ^c Antiq. book xi. chap. 1. Dean Prideaux computes it 150. Connection, part i. b. ii. p. 103.
^d According to Xenophon.

Mandane) were father and mother to Cyrus. Now the conquest of the Babylonians, and the releasing of the Jews, were effected in the following manner: in the year of the world 3445, the king of Babylon^e, being jealous of the united power of the Medes and their neighbours the Persians, designed a war against them. Cyrus, son of Cambyses, king of Persia, with the Persian army, was invited by his uncle Cyaxares, at that time king of Media, (called in Daniel, Darius the Median,) to take upon him the command of the army of the Medes also, and to manage the war against the king of Babylon and his confederates; which lasted about twenty years: at length, in the year 3466^f, on a solemn yearly festival-day among the Babylonians, which was usually spent in revelling and drunkenness, Cyrus assaulted the city of Babylon, (the rest of the country being subdued before.) Belshazzar, then king thereof, being fearless, relying on the strength of it, had that day made, according to custom, a great feast^g, (as it had been foretold he should; *“in their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake ;*) and used the vessels of the house of the Lord (which had been brought from Jerusalem by his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar) in a profane manner, to the glory of his idols, and the dishonour of God: whereupon a hand-writing upon the wall (being interpreted by the prophet Daniel, who was among the captivesⁱ) denounced the end and ruin of his kingdom, and that it was given to the Medes and Persians.

The same night, this Belshazzar, king of Babylon, was slain^k, and his city was taken by Cyrus, who had broken down the banks of the river Euphrates, on each side of a branch of which the city was built, and draining, made it fordable, according to Jeremiahs prophecy; *“A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up.* Hereby also another prophecy was fulfilled, *“I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water ;* for by reason of the

^e Herodotus and Xenophon apud Usseii Annal. A. M. 3445. ^f Herodotus apud Usseii Annal. A. M. 3466. ^g Dan. v. 1. ^h Jer. li. 39, 57. ⁱ Dan. v. k Dan. v. 30. ^l Jer. l. 38. ^m Isa. xiv. 23.

breaking down the banks of the river, and other artificial lakes and dykes, that had been made formerly to prevent its overflowings into the city, the place must become afterwards full of bogs and marshes. It seems the city was so great, that when the out-parts of it were taken, those in the midst thereof knew nothing of it^a; which verified the prophecy of Jeremiah^o; *One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end.* And no wonder, when it is said to be more like unto a country than a city, being in compass four hundred and eighty furlongs, that is, sixty of our miles, its walls being drawn round the city in the form of an exact square, each side of which was one hundred and twenty furlongs, or fifteen miles in length, wherein were many large void spaces^p. It seems Cyrus, for the present, allowed his uncle Cyaxares (that is, Darius aforesaid) the title, and in part the government of the empire of the Chaldeans, or the kingdom of Babylon^q; *And Darius the Mede took the kingdom,* and himself went into Persia; but soon after returned through Media, and married the only daughter and heiress of his uncle Cyaxares^r, having for a portion the inheritance of the kingdom of the Medes after her father's decease.

In the year 3468, Cambyses, king of Persia, (the father of Cyrus,) and Cyaxares, king of Media, (the uncle and also the father-in-law of Cyrus,) being both dead, Cyrus became the sovereign of both kingdoms of the Medes and Persians, and also of the Chaldeans or Babylonians, (whom he had newly conquered,) and so of the whole eastern empire, (which he calls, in the lofty style of the eastern people, *all the kingdoms of the earth*.) And then being incited by God to release the Jews from their captivity, (or, in the Scripture phrase, *the Lord having stirred up his spirit,*) he suffered them to return into their own land^t. Josephus tells us^u, that

^a Herodotus, *ibid.* ^o Jer. li. 31. ^p Herodotus, lib. 1. et 3. apud Usseii

Annal. sub A. M. 3466. and Dean Prideaux's Connection, part i. book ii. p. 95.

^q According to Dan. v. 31.

^r Herodot. lib. 1. 3. apud Usseer. Ann. sub A. M. 3466. and Prideaux's Connect. p. i. b. ii. p. 95.

^s Ezra i. 2.

^t Ezra i. 1.

^u Antiq. book xi. ch. 1.

“Cyrus had read the prophecy of Isaiah” aforementioned ^x, concerning his being designed by God “to subdue kingdoms, and re-establish the Hebrews in their native country, which prophecy bore date two hundred and ten years before he was born; and that he was so transported in reading those divine predictions concerning himself, that he presently fell to work upon making good his part of the prophecy, and recited it in his edict ^y.”

The Jews, when returned, could not perform their solemn public worship of God, nor enjoy the benefit of making atonement for their sins, after the manner of God’s appointment, without an altar: and therefore the first thing they did was to set up the altar of God for burnt-offerings, and for their morning and evening sacrifices ^z, and afterwards, by degrees, built Jerusalem and the temple of God, notwithstanding the spiteful oppositions of the Samaritans, who occasioned the hindering of the building for some time: so that it was twenty years before the temple was completely finished ^a. The work of rebuilding the temple was so far owned by God, as that he sent his prophets Haggai and Zechariah on purpose to encourage and forward the building ^b.

This second temple, being finished about twenty years after their return, was dedicated to the honour and service of God in a very solemn manner, (as Solomon had before dedicated the first temple,) with offerings and sacrifices, and settling the worship of God: who was pleased to increase the joy of the people for their new temple, by sending the prophet Haggai to declare, *The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former* ^c; not as being a more stately building, (for the ancient men, who had seen the former, wept for the smallness of this ^d,) but in regard that Christ the Messiah should one day honour it with his presence: for this was that temple (though much repaired) which Christ in his time resorted to. Thus much was also foretold by the prophet Malachi, ^e *The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly*

^x Isa. xliv. 28. ^y Compare Ezra i. 1, 2. ^z Ezra iii. 3. ^a For this, read the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, and Daniel v. ^b Ezra v. 1. ^c Haggai ii. 9.

^d Ezra iii. 12. ^e Malachi iii. 1.

come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; by which Lord the ancient Jews understand King Messiah ^f.

But it is observable, that although it pleased God the temple should be rebuilt, yet all immediate revelation of the divine Spirit ^g ceased under this second temple. The Jews do generally acknowledge ^h, that five things were wanting after the return from the Babylonian captivity; *viz.* *first*, The ark, with the propitiatory or mercy-seat. *Secondly*, The fire from heaven, which consumed the sacrifices, in testimony of God's acceptance, and was wont to be kept burning ⁱ, and was renewed when Solomon had finished the first temple ^k. *Thirdly*, The shechinah, or divine glory, by which God had used to manifest his presence ^l. *Fourthly*, The Urim and Thummim on the breastplate of the high-priest, whereby God gave answers to the people ^m. And, *lastly*, the spirit of prophecy, which ceased by the death of Malachi. As the want of these benefits was a sign of God's displeasure, and a foretoken of his rejecting them on their future disobedience; so it was a proper means of awakening them to a more lively expectancy of a more perfect state under the Messiah. The ancient Jews indeed mention one kind of divine revelation to remain to them under the second temple, *viz.* the *bath-kol*, or, a voice from heaven, sometimes vouchsafed to some particular persons ⁿ. This a learned doctor esteems either to be one of the fabulous accounts of the rabbies, or else a delusion of the devil ^o. However, it is certain their ancient and gravest authors mention it ^p; and it is as certain that such a voice came from heaven to Christ and St. Paul ^q.

Further, it is to be observed, that although the people who returned were such as had been taken captive, or their

^f Dr. Pocock on Malachi iii. 1. ^g Quod Sp. S. Numinisque præsentior vis illinc abcessisset. Cunæus, lib. ii. cap. 2. ^h Lightf. Hor. in Joh. ii. 21. ⁱ Lev. ix. 24. and vi. 13. ^k 2 Chron. vii. 1. ^l Exod. xl. 34. 2 Chron. vii. 1. ^m Exod. xxviii. 30. ⁿ Hottinger. lib. ii. cap. 1. §. 4. p. 515. ^o Lightf. Hor. in Matt. iii. 17. compare Dean Prideaux's Connection, p. ii. b. 5. anno 107. ^p So the Talmudists, the Chaldee Paraphr. and the Rabbins, vide Hottinger. *ibid.* particularly Maimon. Mor. Nev. pars ii. cap. 42. ^q Matt. iii. John xii. Acts ix.

children, *viz.* those of the kingdom of Judah, consisting chiefly of two tribes, Judah and Benjamin; yet, forasmuch as some of the ten tribes had formerly joined themselves to Judah, notwithstanding the division^r, and therefore were captives among the rest; they also, or their children, were among those who returned; so that there still remained some relics, a remnant, of the other ten tribes^s. *The whole congregation together*, which returned, (that is, by adding those who could not find out their genealogy, or register of their birth^t, or those of other tribes besides Judah and Benjamin, to the particular numbers set down in the chapter,) *was forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore, besides servants^u.*

The language spoken by the Jews in their own country, before the captivity, was the ancient Hebrew; but in their long abode among the Chaldeans and Syrians, during their seventy years' captivity, the purity of the Hebrew was lost among the vulgar, and they mixed their own language with the Chaldean or Syriac^x, which they brought home with them after the captivity, and which was generally called the Syriac language, the same that continued to be vulgarly spoken by the Jews in the time of Christ and his apostles; whence it was, that when the law was read to the people, Ezra and the Levites *gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading^y.* And this custom of explaining the reading of the law out of the Hebrew by the Chaldee, which they understood, continued in their synagogues, and at length gave occasion to the Targum, or Chaldee paraphrases.

After their return from the Babylonian captivity, the people were governed by some chiefs or heads amongst them, as Ezra, Zerubbabel, (who is supposed to be the same with Sheshbazzar, that being his Babylonish name, entitled *prince of Judah^z*, and *governor of Judah^a*.) and Nehemiah; and after the settlement, by the high priest, (who had the

^r See what is said before concerning the division of the two kingdoms.
^s Luke ii. 36. Acts xxvi. 7. ^t Ezra ii. 62. ^u Ezra ii. 64. ^x Lightf.
 Hor. in Joh. v. 2. Dr. Walton. Prolegom. Polyglot. in Bib. num. iii. §. 22, 23, 24.
^y Nehem. viii. 7, 8. ^z Ezra i. 8. ^a Haggai i. 1.

temporal as well as ecclesiastical authority,) assisted by the Sanhedrim, or council spoken of before. Josephus says^b, that “they erected an aristocracy, and that the sovereign power was lodged in the high-priests, (till the time of the Maccabees, or Asmonean family,)” and so much appears from Alexander’s sending to the high-priest, as their governor^c, and from the high-priest’s returning an answer as such. But still they were tributary, and in subjection to the Persian monarchs as their chief sovereigns, and to their deputy-governors of Syria and Phœnicia, of which province the Jews’ country was reckoned a part; and so for the most part, when they were afterwards subjected to Alexander the Great, and after him to the Egyptians and Syrians, the high-priest, with the council or Sanhedrim, bore the chief sway at home, but under the controlment of the foreign kings, who had made them tributary, and had the sovereignty over them, till the change of the government under the Maccabees, of which afterwards.

The affairs of the church and the canon of Scripture were settled by Ezra, with the assistance of the rest of the great council, among whom were the later prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, being all endued with the divine prophetic spirit. These set forth a correct edition of the canon of the Old Testament, which was owned and confirmed by Christ and his Apostles^d. Since their return, they lost, in a great measure, the name of Israelites, and were called Jews, from Judah, their principal tribe, which made up the chief of the captives in Babylon, and consequently of those who returned from thence^e.

The great sin, amongst others, for which the Jews were, by God’s providence and permission, made captives in Babylon, was idolatry; but we never read they were guilty of this sin after their return, except those who through fear sacrificed

^b Antiq. book xi. chap. 4. near the end. ^c Id. ib. chap. 8. and Dion. Cassius, in his account of Pompey and Hyrcanus the high-priest, (lib. xxxvii. p. 36.) observes, that the Jews allow the kingly authority to the high priesthood, *οὐτω γὰρ τὴν βασιλείαν σφῶν ὠνομαζον*.

^d Polyglot. Prolegom. num. iv. §. 2, 3. Du Pin of the Canon, book i. chap. 1. §. 2. and see what is said before concerning the book of the Law found by Hilkiah. ^e Joseph. Antiq. b. xi. ch. 5. towards the end.

unto idols, under the persecution raised by Antiochus Epiphanes^f; the remembrance of their captivity being kept up from one generation to another: and besides that, after their return, they had synagogues, or places of religious assemblies, in most of their larger towns; wherein, besides the prayers and praises, the law, and the severe threatenings against the contemners of it, especially by idolatrous worship, was constantly read; by which means they might be the better secured from a returning to idolatry. From the time of their settlement to their sufferings under Antiochus Epiphanes, (of which afterwards,) somewhat above three hundred years, they enjoyed a great share of peace and prosperity, according as the prophet had foretold and promised, though with some mixture of troubles now and then.

The great doctrine concerning eternal life was more firmly believed, and the benefits thereof expected in the Jewish church, from the time of the return from the Babylonian captivity, by the generality of the people, than before^g; which a learned writer^h supposes to be designed by the Divine Providence, to support them under the loss of their former freedom, and temporal prosperity, which the letter of the law so frequently encouraged them to hope for the continuance of; lest their late calamities, and present subjection to the Persian monarchs, should, by making them to despond of those earthly blessings, tempt them to forsake their religion.

In this history of the captivity and return, we may observe how sin provoked God, and what his justice first, and then his wisdom and power, can effect.

The last book of the Old Testament, concerning the history of the Jews, is that of Esther, wherein we have a most wonderful instance of the wisdom and providence of God, in delivering his people, and overthrowing their enemies, in the reign of Ahasuerus, who is supposed to be the same with Artaxerxes Longimanus, the Persian emperorⁱ.

^f 1 Macc. i. 43. ^g See what is already observed concerning the promises and threatenings expressed in the law of Moses. ^h Grot. in Matt. v. 20. ⁱ So the Seventy, in chap. i. 1. and Joseph. Antiq. b. xi. ch. 6. See at large Dean Prideaux's Old and New Testament connected, part i. book 4.

In this history there are two things remarkable: *first*, The marriage of Esther to the emperor, which was designed by the over-ruling providence of God, for the same cause that Joseph was sent into Egypt, that she might be the instrument of deliverance in time of need. *Secondly*, The same destruction befel Haman, their principal adversary, which he had mischievously contrived for Mordecai, their friend; and the same honour was conferred on Mordecai, which Haman ambitiously designed for himself. From this history we learn to have recourse to God in time of distress, and to rely on his wisdom, goodness, and power.

The history of the Jews hitherto mentioned is a part of the canonical or divine Scripture, because it was written whilst God vouchsafed the spirit of prophecy, which ceased by the death of Malachi, the last of the prophets.

Before we proceed, some practical observations may be made from divers particular parts of the foregoing history of the Israelites, after their first settlement in Canaan, besides those hitherto mentioned in the course of their history, in order to our improvement in practice as well as knowledge, by reading the histories contained in the holy Bible, which, as it hath been already observed, ought to be one great design in reading them: for instance, the first part of the book of Judges informs us, that notwithstanding God was pleased to settle the Israelites in the promised land, by so many wonderful works which he wrought for them, yet, as soon as they forsook him and his laws, he delivered them into their enemies' hands, who very often and grievously oppressed them; and yet, upon their repentance and return to him, he appointed and enabled judges to protect them: whence we learn, on the one hand, not to abuse his mercies; and, on the other, not to despair of his goodness on our repentance and reformation. From ^k the Israelites learning to commit idolatry, by conversing with the idol worshippers, (as afterwards Solomon did ^l,) we are instructed to avoid the society of vicious persons, if we hope to continue virtuous ourselves. From ^m Gideon's thirty-two thousand men being reduced to

^k Judges iii. 5, &c.

^l 1 Kings xi.

^m Judges vii.

three hundred, with which the Midianites were conquered, we are taught, that although outward means are to be used, yet the providence and power of God is most to be relied on. From Abimelech's obtaining a kingdom by the murder of his brethrenⁿ, but soon after, with his accomplices, being ruined and destroyed himself, we are instructed not to rely on, or be encouraged by, the present effects of any prosperous villany, since God frequently *renders the wickedness* of such *on their own heads*^o. From ^p Samson's being betrayed by Delilah, men are cautioned of the danger of giving up themselves into the hands of a lewd woman. ^q Hannah's dedicating her only child to the honour and service of God, and being rewarded with a more numerous offspring *for the loan which she lent to the Lord*, is an encouragement to devote a part of what we have (be it a child, or some other of our possessions) to the same purpose. From the doom threatened to Eli and his house^r, because *his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not*, warning is given to all parents, who, either through indulgence or neglect, suffer their children to persist in impiety. From Uzzah's fate^s, when *he put forth his hand to the ark of God*, though out of a good intention to keep it from falling, which belonged to the office of a priest to do^t, those are admonished, who presume to execute the priest's office, not being called thereto. ^u We have an example in David's bringing up the ark of God with such a transport of joy and zeal, as (afterwards in Solomon's dedication of the temple^x,) to be forward, and rejoice in every opportunity for promoting the good of the church, and the public service of God.

From David's indulging an intemperate gazing on Uriah's wife, and thence proceeding to those heinous sins of adultery with her, and the murder of her husband^y, we are instructed to avoid all the occasions and opportunities of committing wickedness, also to give a check to the first motions thereto: and however he obtained pardon for those sins^z, yet that

ⁿ Judges ix. ^o Ver. 56, 57. ^p Judges xvi. ^q 1 Sam. i. 28. and ii. 20, 21.
^r 1 Sam. iii. 13. ^s 2 Sam. vi. 6, 7. ^t Deut. xxxi. 9. See also 2 Chron. xxvi. 16, &c.
^u 2 Sam. vi. 12. to the end of the chapter; and 1 Chron. xv. xvi. ^x 1 Kings viii. ^y 2 Sam. xi. 12. ^z 2 Sam. xii. 13.

should be no encouragement to venture the commission of the like, on presumption of pardon too, because David was not so reconciled to God, but that the sins entailed the sword on his house and family^a: then the child he begot in adultery was to die, to his great sorrow^b: and, *lastly*, it cost him many spiritual agonies, and great remorse, and a very strict repentance, as whoso reads Psalm li. composed on that occasion, will soon be convinced of: all which considered, it appears, that the satisfaction in the commission of the like sins would be too dearly purchased, even upon the expectancy of such a reconciliation. From Absalom's rebelling against his father^c, religious parents are taught to bear the more patiently the stubbornness and oppositions of their children, when God hath permitted his most zealous servants to be so afflicted. Ahithophel's^d counsel being not only defeated, but also tending to his own overthrow, should discourage all those designs which have in them more craft and policy than integrity and honesty, since this instance shews the most subtle devices to be over-ruled by God's appointment or providence^e. ' Absalom's untimely end being occasioned by his rebellion against his father, is an admonishment to all children of the displeasure of God, and their own infinite danger, on such their behaviour. David's charge to his son a little before his death, to *serve God with a perfect heart*^f, is a good example to all parents, to instil such a lesson into the minds of their children, both living and dying.

Jeroboam's hand being withered, which he stretched forth against the prophet of the Lord^g, as also the fifty men consumed by fire from heaven, who were sent to seize on the prophet Elijah^h, should deter men in authority from offering unjust violence to the ministers of religion: and^k the prophet being prevailed on to break an express command, to his own ruin, by another pretending prophet's persuasion, affords us a caution how we listen to any enthusiasts, pretending to the

^a 2 Sam. xii. 10.^b Ver. 14, 16.^c 2 Sam. xv.^d 2 Sam. xvii.^e Ver. 14.^f 2 Sam. xviii.^g 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.^h 1 Kings xiii. 4.ⁱ 2 Kings i. 9—13.^k 1 Kings xiii. 15—25.

spirit, in a matter contrary to plain Scripture revelation. ¹ Ahab's dreadful sentence, for his unjust seizure on Naboth's estate, should check all violent and unjust occupation of other men's goods and possessions. Ahaziah, king of Israel ^m, being sick, sent a messenger to Baalzebub, an idol-god, to enquire after the event of his disease; upon which the prophet pronounced that he should *surely die*: like as before, ^a *Saul died for his transgression, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it*. A warning this may be to all such who, distrusting God, ask the counsel and assistance of conjurors and evil spirits. The rich ^o Shunamite woman being barren, by her succouring a prophet, obtained a child; which is encouragement to comfort and assist those in their distress, who more particularly are devoted to God's service.

^p Jehu appeared very zealous for the true God, and destroyed the worshippers of Baal; but for retaining the golden calves, set up by Jeroboam, before mentioned, out of a political design of the better securing his kingdom, is branded with hypocrisy, as *not walking in the law of God with all his heart*. So little does God accept the service of those who are religious only where it is convenient for them to be so, and avoid some sins, yet still retain those which bring them most profit and satisfaction. ^q We have a noble instance of a true religious behaviour, and trust in God, in the time of adversity and danger, in Hezekiah; who, having received a severe threatening letter from the king of Assyria, (a very formidable enemy,) would not neglect the proper means of defence, but *strengthened himself with fortifications*, and an army ^r; but in the mean time his chiefest reliance was, that with his enemy there was an *arm of flesh*; but with him and his people was *the Lord their God*^s; and according to this hope, he *went up into the house of God, and spread the letter before the Lord, and prayed for his help*^t. The result was, he was delivered,

¹ 1 Kings xxi. and xxii. 37, 38. ^m 2 Kings i. 2—5. ⁿ 1 Chron. x. 13.
^o 2 Kings iv. 8—17. ^p 2 Kings x. 25—32. ^q 2 Kings xix. and 2 Chron.
xxxii. ^r 2 Chron. xxxii. 1—7. ^s Ver. 7, 8. ^t 2 Kings xix. 14, &c.

and his enemies destroyed^u. And surely we cannot do better than, in imitation of this excellent pattern, in our time of distress and danger, whilst we use the proper means, chiefly to depend on the goodness, and wisdom, and power of God, on our earnest supplications^x. The effect of a contrary practice appears in Asa's *not seeking to the Lord in his disease, but to the physicians*^y. The next account we have is, that *Asa slept with his fathers*; not that he did ill in seeking to the physicians, but in not chiefly seeking to and relying on the Lord. From Belshazzar's fate in the destruction of his kingdom, and his own slaughter, mentioned with this particular circumstance^z, that he sacrilegiously profaned *the golden vessels that had been taken out of the temple of God, and drank wine in them, together with his lords and wives, &c.*^a sufficient caution is given against sacrilege and profaneness, in converting things dedicated to God's service to a private or common use: for it is that which Belshazzar is particularly charged with, as well as his using those vessels to the honour of his idol gods, *viz. that he drank wine in them, with his lords and wives.*

Lastly, We may make two other remarks on the history of the captivity of Israel and Judah, aforementioned: *first*, That national sins are attended with national judgments, they being made captives chiefly for their idolatry, with which their whole country had been more or less infected. *Secondly*, That the providence of God makes use of some eminent persons, as instruments to effect his purposes, although at the same time they purpose to bring to pass their own designs; for which, in a very surprising manner, they are victorious and successful; and yet, when God's ends are brought about by them, their glory and success at once ceases: as in the instances of the kings of Assyria and Babylon, who led captive Israel and Judah; and of Cyrus, who was to procure the release and return of the latter. Their victories and success were generally beyond their own expectations, as well as amazing to the rest of the world; but were at an end when God's work was accomplished by them.

^u 2 Kings xix. 20, to the end of the chapter. ^x See also, to the same purpose, 2 Chron. xiv. and xx. ^y 2 Chron. xvi. 12, 13. ^z Dan. v. ^a Ver. 3, 4, 23.

CHAP. XVII.

Concerning the Prophets.

IN the next place, we are to consider the Prophets, which were sent by God at several times to the kings and people of the Jews; one reason whereof is given ^a, that they might be kept from having recourse to the heathen oracles and soothsayers, for want of prophets of their own, and slight their own legal institutions, as not affording them the benefit the heathen pretended to; for as the curiosity of mankind in general permitted them not to be contented without seeking for knowledge and assistance from some more extraordinary and divine persons, so it was with the nations round about the Jews; and therefore, next to the charge against hearkening to diviners, there follows a promise of a succession of prophets among themselves, of which the chief was to be the Messiah, in the fulness of time ^b. These prophets were persons whom God raised up, by giving them extraordinary measures of his Spirit, not only to foretel things to come, but also (which is the chief sense of the word *prophet* and *prophesying*, in the New Testament) to explain his will to the people, and teach them their duty. They were also to be messengers from him on some extraordinary occasions, to reprove for sins, and threaten his judgments, to encourage and comfort the penitent, to keep up in them a reliance on Providence, to direct them in doubtful cases, and, lastly, to prepare them for and foretel the coming of the Messiah. Such an one was called *a man of God*, and *a seer*, as having a vision, sight, or knowledge ^c.

The signs for distinguishing a true prophet from a false one were chiefly these: *first*, By his *doctrine*, that he endeavoured to preserve the people in the worship of the true God, the God of Israel, according to the doctrine already established, and did not draw them off to the worship of an idol-god ^d. *Secondly*, By a *sign from heaven*, as by working some miracle,

^a Orig. contra Celsum, lib. i. edit. Cantab. 1677. p. 28.
Acts iii. 22.

^c 1 Sam. ix, 8, 9.

^d Deut. xiii. 1, &c.

^b Deut. xvii. 14, 15.

&c. such as Samuel wrought^e, and Elijah^f; and the Pharisees demanding of Christ a *sign from heaven*^g, shews it was a common opinion among the Jews, that such a sign was one evidence of a true prophet, together with the last mentioned. *Thirdly*, By his *predictions being fulfilled*^h: thus Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lordⁱ. But as to this sign there are two exceptions: the one is, when the prophecy was conditional only, as in the case of the Ninevites, who Jonah prophesied should be destroyed, and yet they were not, because they repented: nevertheless, Jonah was a true prophet, because his prediction was conditional, except they did repent. The other exception as to this sign was, when the prophecies reached far beyond the time of the prophets, as that of Isaiah concerning Cyrus, and all the prophecies concerning the captivity, and the return from it, there was no reason to wait the fulfilling, before the prophet was believed to be such an one. In such case it was sufficient that there were other evidences that he spake by divine revelation. *Lastly*, By the testimony of another known prophet, as of Moses for Joshua^k.

God revealed his will to these prophets several ways: as, *first*, By *dreams*, and that with such strength and force on their imaginations, as was sufficient to evidence them to be divine. *Secondly*, By visions, or powerful impressions on their minds, which the Jewish doctors call *prophetical visions*, and which they explain “by having their outward senses, as it were, bound up from exercising their ordinary functions, even when they were awake, whilst the spiritual influence came strongly upon their minds and imagination^l, representing to them things as plainly as if they saw them with their eyes and bodily senses, in such resemblances, which did make them known to them, that they might discover them to those whom God would have to know them^m.” *Thirdly*, By *inspirations*, or enlightening their minds and understanding

^e 1 Sam. xii. 18. ^f 1 Kings xvii. 24. 2 Kings i. 10. ^g Matt. xvi. 1. ^h Deut. xviii. 22. ⁱ 1 Sam. iii. 19, 20. See also Jer. xxviii. 9. Ezek. xxxiii. 33. ^k Deut. xxxi. 7. ^l Maimon. Mor. Nevoch. pars ii. cap. xli. p. 307. et in Porta Mosis, p. 171. edit. Oxon. 1655. ^m Dr. Pocock on Hosea xii. 10. p. 684.

clearly, to apprehend and discern what was revealed to them, and (as was observed before, in the instance of Abraham's attempt to slay his son) with a full assurance that the revelation came from God himself, and that as infallibly as we know what is discovered to any one of us, by the words or writings of another; which certainly God is as able to effect as we can one for anotherⁿ; and his wisdom and goodness must dispose him to take the most effectual course for the execution of his design. It might be for want of such an assurance then, that it was said of Samuel, *that he did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him*^o, that is, so plainly as it was afterwards. ^p*The Lord had told Samuel in his ear*^q.

These prophets were of two sorts: the *first*, those who were bred up in the colleges or schools of the prophets; of which institution Samuel is supposed to be the first author. These schools were for their advancement in knowledge and piety: thus we read of *a company of prophets*^r. Again, *a company of prophets, and Samuel standing as appointed over them*^s. Such a school was at Bethel^t, and at Jericho^u. These are called *sons of the prophets*, as being trained up by some who were their governors and instructors, who were called *fathers*: so Elisha called Elijah, *my father*^x. And although the spirit of prophecy is not attainable by education, but is given immediately from God, yet it is very reasonable that God should choose those he should think fit to inspire with the spirit of prophecy out of such a society, as being best qualified for the offices of teaching and reproof, and against whom the people could have the less prejudice.

The second sort of prophets were extraordinary, whom God did send upon great occasions, as Isaiah, Jeremiah, &c.

In the history of the Kings, till the reign of Uzziah, are mentioned these following prophets: Samuel, Nathan, Gad, Shemaiah, Ahijah, Iddo, Jehu, Oded, Azariah, Micaiah,

ⁿ See before, chap. i. §. 4. concerning inspiration in general. ^o 1 Sam. iii. 7.
^p 1 Sam. ix. 15. ^q Which Arias Montanus translates, *Dominus revelaverat autem Samueli*, i. e. plainly told Samuel. ^r 1 Sam. x. 5. ^s 1 Sam. xix. 20. ^t 2 Kings ii. 3. ^u Ver. 5. ^x Ver. 12.

Elijah, and Elisha, and the prophetess Huldah, (as before there^y had been other women prophetesses, *viz.* Miriam and Deborah, and afterwards Anna.) Other prophets there were from the reign of Uzziah, whose books of their prophecies make up a part of the Bible. These prophets were sent from time to time to the kings and people of Israel and Judah, before mentioned, to forewarn them of those judgments which after befel them for their sins, to instruct them in their duty, and persuade them to renounce their sins; and, to that end, encouraging them to hope in God's mercy and favour, as we read in the books of the prophets. But all was in vain; so they were ruined, and made captive, as we have seen before. It is computed, that when the first of these prophets were sent, it was about fourscore years before the destruction of the kingdom of Israel, and two hundred years before the beginning of the captivity of the Jews in Babylon: so merciful and patient was God, and yet so just when still offended.

For the better understanding the prophets, the following general remarks may be observed:

Remark I. Those prophets were to foretel the times of the Gospel, and to prepare the people for the coming of the Messiah, or Christ, whom some of them spoke of between seven and eight hundred years before he appeared, by foretelling what sort of person he should be, and what he should do and suffer; and also the state and condition of the church under him; and that which they foretold of his birth, life, and death, &c. being fulfilled in our Lord Jesus, and in no other person; and that, in such a manner, as plainly shews an over-ruling providence of God in the accomplishment, is our evidence that he is the promised Messiah and Saviour. Hence also it appears, that the coming of Christ was the grand work or design of God, since it was foretold so often, and so long beforehand.

Remark II. Although some of the prophecies concerning Christ had also a reference, first, to some eminent persons who

^y But these were extraordinary; otherwise ordinarily the female sex ought not to pretend to the exercise of any ministerial function in the church. 1 Cor. xiv. 34. 1 Tim. ii. 12.

were types of him, and to some of their most eminent actions, yet others so relate to him, in their proper and literal sense, that they cannot be applied to any other, and never were fulfilled in any other person^z: as, for instance, Isa. liii. which so fully describes the outward mean appearance of Christ, his sufferings in our stead, his innocency and meekness, and his death and burial. So Dan. ix. 24, &c. where the time of Christ's appearance is plainly foretold, as will be observed in the account to be given of that prophet^a.

Remark III. Other prophecies are to be understood in a two-fold sense, *viz.* primary and literal, that strictly concerned the Jews, and their affairs, and the mystical sense, which relates to Christ and the manifestation of the Gospel^b: for instance, *Out of Egypt have I called my son*^c, which doubtless, in the literal sense, was meant of God's delivering the children of Israel, to whom he was a father, from their slavery in Egypt; but in the mystical sense, of Christ, the Son of God, being carried into Egypt to be preserved from Herod, and afterwards brought again from thence^d. Again, *Rachel* (Jacob's wife) *weeping for her children*, or posterity, had, in the first place, a respect to their being carried away captive; and the prophet, in the next verse, makes a comfortable promise of a return; and yet that weeping of Rachel had a more particular respect to the mothers weeping for their children, whom Herod slew^e. So the ancient Jewish doctors understand Psalm ii.^g both as having a respect to David and Christ. Although indeed these prophecies could not be fully

^z To this purpose, chap. x. part 1. of Bishop Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, is worth reading.

^a See also Psal. lxi. 21. xxii. 16, 18. xlv. 6.

Zech. xii. 10. Mic. v. 2.

^b Glassii Philolog. Sacr. lib. ii. pars 1. tract. 1. and

Dr. Lowth's Vindication, chap. iii. p. 146. And those moderns who find fault with this twofold sense of many passages in the Old Testament, or an allegorical exposition of them, as explained by our Saviour and his Apostles, either do not know, or not duly consider, that there was nothing more common than for the Jews, with whom Christ and his Apostles argued in that manner, to expound the mystical sense (which they call by the name of Midrashim) as well as the literal. See Hottinger. Thesaurus, lib. i. cap. ii. §. 7.

^c Hos. xi. 1.

^d Matt. ii. 15.

^e Jer. xxxi. 15.

^f Matt. ii. 18.

^g Grot. ad Matt. i. 22. and Bishop

Patrick on Psalm ii.

understood, till the Holy Ghost revealed the full import of them by the Apostles; and yet many of them have evident marks that something further is designed by them than what is contained in the first-intended or literal sense, which does not come up to the full sense and import of the words; as that of Isa. vii. 14. *A virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel*, (or, God with us,) looks further than that literal and low sense given of it, for the encouragement of king Ahaz, viz. one that is now a virgin shall bear a son, and by his name shew that God is with us; which is very mean in comparison with the more complete and mystical sense revealed^h, that the sign or miracle should be such a one, as that a virgin should continue so, and yet bear a son, who should manifest himself to be *the Son of God*, being *made flesh*, and dwelling with us, and be our great Deliverer, of which the deliverances of the Jews were types and presages. So also that of Davidⁱ, of *piercing his hands and feet, parting his garments, and casting lots upon his vesture*; and^k of his being *given gall and vinegar to drink*; both which passages appear to be understood of the person of David in a figurative sense, by way of similitude only, as importing a severe and unkind usage of him, and were never literally true of David, as far as appears in his history, but being to be literally fulfilled in Christ, the particulars are so expressed in the prophecy.

Remark IV. The state of the Gospel, and the benefits thereof, are mystically set out in the prophets, by expressions suitable to their own times, and agreeing with, and proper to, the Old Testament dispensation^l; as by phrases taken from the religious worship under the law, and such things as the Jews reckoned most excellent and glorious. Thus, because their sacrifices and oblations, and the worshipping at Jerusalem, was the most excellent religious worship which the Jews could apprehend, therefore, when the prophet Isaiah foretold the converting of the Egyptians to Christ, he said, *There shall be an altar to the Lord in the land of Egypt, and*

^h Matt. i. 23.

ⁱ Psalm xxii. 16, 18.

^k Psalm lxix. 21.

^l Glassii

Philolog. Sacr. lib. i. tract. iv. §. i. can. 5.

they shall do sacrifice and oblations^m. So also he foretold the Gentiles' owning and worshipping Christ, by the nations going up to Jerusalem at the solemn feastsⁿ. And this is often the manner of the prophets under the Old Testament, to set forth the days of the Messiah, the conversion of the Jews, the Christian worship, and the spiritual kingdom of Christ under the Gospel; and also God's spiritual gifts and blessings on the Christian church, by the expressions proper to the times in which they lived, importing literally the restoration of Jerusalem, the temple and sacrifices, the kingdom of David, &c. in order to recommend them more powerfully to the people. To the same purpose, the exaltation and enlargement of the Christian church is expressed after the same manner^o.

St. Peter assists us thus to understand the prophets, when he applies these words, *Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a precious corner-stone*, to the spiritual building of the Christian church, and Christ the head thereof^q. After the same manner St. Peter again acquaints us^r, that they are the spiritual gifts of the Holy Ghost under the New Testament, and the Gospel dispensation, which were foretold by Joel^s in terms suitable to the state of the Old Testament, and signifying literally the old prophetic dreams and visions. By the way, this remark discovers to us the gross mistake of the Jews, who observing many prophetic passages relating to the coming of the Messiah to run in the old strain of the law, they presently conclude, that the Messiah must not innovate any thing concerning their way of worship, and so expound such-like texts above mentioned in a literal sense, which were only expressed in that manner, the better to help the understanding, and comply with the capacity of those they spake to.

This mystical way of expressing things was much used by

^m Isaiah xix. 19, 21. ⁿ Chap. lx. 1—8. and lxvi. 20, 23. See also Ezek. xx. 33, 34, 40, 41. Mic. iv. 12. and Mal. i. 11. where the Christian worship is called offering *incense and a pure offering*. ^o Jer. xxxiii. 17, 18. Hos. iii. 5. Mal. iii. 4.

^p Isa. xxviii. 16. ^q 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5, 6. ^r Acts ii. 16, 17. ^s Chap. ii. 28.

the ancients, especially of the eastern 'country; and particularly the Jews were accustomed to it, and accordingly were wont to interpret the Scripture", (till the modern Jews, in their disputes with Christians, found it necessary to reject the opinion of their ancestors, lest the Christians should make any advantage of the argument against them, in proof of Christ being the Messiah,) and therefore such a style of the prophets was most suitable to the Jews: for instance^x, *The wolf shall dwell with the lamb; they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord*; which the Jewish rabbies understood to set forth the peace and happiness, and love and truth, in the days of the Messiah's kingdom, that is, what the nature and design of his doctrine would tend to; and, where it should prevail, what it would proportionably effect. Again, there is great reason that men should not perfectly understand, long beforehand, all the particulars of some of the prophecies; because if they had, that would have been a means of hindering the very things to be brought about, which were foretold, unless God should deprive the persons intended to effect them of the freedom of their will, or overturn the usual course of the world. For instance, if the particular person of the Virgin Mary, and the precise night of Christ's birth in Bethlehem, and all other circumstances of that great transaction, had been so expressly revealed, that none could have mistaken it, the Bethlehemiters would not have denied the holy Virgin their houses to be delivered in; and so that humble manner of Christ's coming into the world, his being born in a manger, would have been prevented; nor would the rulers have given *thirty pieces of silver to Judas*, or *bought a potter's field*, if that prophecy of Zechariah^y had been plain concerning Christ; much less, had they clearly discerned the prophecies concerning his death, would they ever have fulfilled them in condemning him. It was sufficient, that the general designs of the prophets should be manifest,

^t Clemens Alexandr. Strom. lib. v.
Verit. Relig. Christ. lib. v. §. 18.

^u Maim. Dav. R. Kimchi apud Grot. de
^x Isa. xi. 6, 9. ^y Zech. xi. 12, 13.

and the particulars reserved for a further discovery in the accomplishment.

And though some of the prophecies concerning Christ might not be, even in general, understood by the people to whom they were spoken, which yet is more than we know, yet they are of great use to discover the providence of God, and for the confirmation of our faith, when we compare the event with the prophecies, and finding them fulfilled, do therein plainly see the work was God's, and the effect of his wisdom and power; as God himself declared his intention in foretelling some things, among others, to be this^z; *I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it came to pass I shewed it thee; lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, &c.* The fulfilling of the prophecies concerning Christ, (as also of those which foretold the captivity of Israel and Judah, and the like,) clearly shew that there is a Divine Providence, and that it is God who governs the world, since by his prophets he so long foretold and threatened what did afterwards come to pass, according as himself had designed to effect. For which purpose, no doubt, many such prophecies were recorded, which are to be expounded only by the event, (at least by those who lived some considerable time after they were uttered^a.) So also some of the prophecies in the Revelations; as it was the accomplishment of that prophecy concerning Christ^b, *Behold thy King cometh riding on an ass*, which made the disciples understand it, when they *remembered that these things were written of him*, and that the people *had done these things unto him*^c.

Here we may further observe, that the expression of *the last days*, sometimes used by the prophets, signifies the days or dispensation of the Messiah^d, and the times of the Gospel, (upon the abolition of the Jewish dispensation,) and that not only in the first ages thereof, but from the first appearance of Christ, or Messiah, to the end of the world; which time is termed *the last day*, or *the last time*, because there is no new

^z Isa. xlvi. 5. ^a Such as Gen. xlix. Deut. xxxiii. Dan. xi. ^b Zech. ix. 9.
^c John xii. 16. ^d According to the notion of the ancient Jews, as in the Chaldee Paraphr. Targums, &c. apud Kidder's Demonstration, part iii. chap. 9.

age or dispensation to succeed unto it, as the two former times succeeded each other, being the one from the creation to Moses, the other from Moses to Christ. So what in Joel is said to come to pass *afterwards*, the Apostle renders^e, shall come to pass *in the last days*: now the word, which in the original signifies *afterwards*, in Joel the Jews themselves^f expound to be the same in sense with the words *the last days*^g, where is a plain prophecy of the exaltation of Christ's kingdom^h.

Once more, under this head it may be remarked, that although the Gospel of Christ hath wonderfully been advanced, and the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah propagated, (which advancement and propagation of the Gospel was mystically set forth by the prophets in a manner suitable to the Old Testament dispensation, as we have seen;) and although it be true, that all promises of this life are to be understood with exception of the cross, and also, that the promises of Christ's kingdom are only to begin, and more imperfectly to be fulfilled, in this life; yet some of the prophecies relating theretoⁱ, mention so much unity and holiness, prosperity and peace, not yet experienced, that they seem to foreshew a future more glorious state of the Christian church on earth, abounding in purity, peace, and happiness, both among converted Jews and Gentiles, when *the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ*^k. Many prophecies mention a more flourishing state and enlargement of the Gospel, even to *all the ends of the earth*^l, than it hath pleased God hitherto to vouchsafe to bless the world with; and therefore the time is to come, when they shall be more fully accomplished by an universal receiving Christ's Gospel, and living according to it; when Christ shall reign in the public and visible triumph of his religion, and when *the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord*^m. Nay, some understand a part of the prophets, not only of the general conversion, but even the restoration of the Jews,

^e Acts ii. 17.^f R. D. Kimchi apud Pocock in Joel ii. 28.^g Isa. ii. 2.^h See also Hos. iii. 5.ⁱ Such as Isa. ii. 4, 5, 6. and xi. 1—10. and lxxv. 25.^j Dan. vii. 14. Joel iii. 9, to the end, &c. ^k Rev. xi. 15. ^l Isa. liii. 10. ^m Isa. xi. 9.

being converted, to their own country, and their city Jerusalemⁿ. To the same purpose^o, Christ's prophecy is interpreted, *Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*

Here we may take notice of another mistake of the Jews; who pretend from hence, that the Messiah is not yet come, because the aforementioned predictions are not yet fulfilled; whereas the time is to come for the fulfilling of them in *the last days*; which expression (as hath been before observed) imports not only the beginning of the days of the Messiah, but any time, from Christ's first appearance, to his second; namely, that season, when, upon the general conversion of the Jews, both they and the Gentiles shall be brought into the church; when God shall *set up an ensign for the nations, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth: and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord*^q. So that, as it is no objection against the ancient prophecies, that some of them are not yet fulfilled, (as the Jews do own those are not which foretel their deliverance and restoration,) because they may yet be accomplished; so it is no objection against Jesus, that some things are not yet fully accomplished, which were to be in some part or other of the days of the Messiah.

Remark V. It is usual with the prophets, to represent^r the dreadfulness of God's judgments on wicked persons, or on the enemies of his church and people, by parabolical or figurative and lofty expressions, after the manner of the eastern countries; as of *the earth's quaking, and being turned upside down, the sun and the moon's being dark, the moon's being turned into blood, and the stars withdrawing their shining, &c.* thereby setting forth, that evil men should be in such a consternation under their sufferings, and put into such disorders,

ⁿ Those which seem most to look that way are Isa. xi. 11, 12. and lxii. 10, 11, 12. Jer. xxxii. 37. Ezek. xi. 17, &c. and xx. 33—45. and xxxvi. 24, &c. Hos. iii. 4, 5. The modern Jews very much encourage themselves with the promise in Lev. xxvi. 44, 45. in their being restored to their own country, and their city Jerusalem. P. Fagius in loc.

^o Vide Grot. in Luc. xxi. 24.

^p Luke xxi. 24.

^q Isa. xi. 9, 12. ^r Maimon. Mor. Nevoch. pars ii. cap. 29.

that all things should seem to them to be out of course, as if the sun were dark, and the moon bloody, and the whole creation in confusion. This was the usual style in the eastern countries: for example, 'the Arabians would say of a person whom any extraordinary misfortune befel, that "his heaven was fallen down upon the earth." Thus ^t, *the earth trembled, the mountains melted from before the Lord*; and possibly ^u, *the stars in their courses fought against Sisera*. In this tragical manner Isaiah threatened God's judgments on Babylon ^v, *The stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine: I will shake the heavens, &c.* and on Idumea ^w, and on the Jews themselves ^x. In such manner Jeremiah threatened Judah and Jerusalem ^y. And thus the prophet Joel pronounced God's judgments ^z; and having afterwards promised the gifts of the Holy Ghost, which Christ would send on his church ^a, (which promise was fulfilled ^b;) he then denounced terrible judgments against the unbelieving Jews, and other enemies of Christ's church, by the like lofty and figurative representations: ^c*And I will shew wonders in the heaven, and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke; the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come*. Which language the Jews were accustomed to, and understood in a figurative sense, as denoting the uttermost desolation and confusion, especially of nations and kingdoms ^d, and very great calamities and distress: which the unbelieving Jews in a great measure felt, (as Christ foretold in the same language ^e;) when they were miserably destroyed by the Romans, (of which afterwards.) But that prophecy shall be most completely fulfilled on all wicked men, at the great day of judgment, (the same expression being used in both cases, because the terrible judgments of God on wicked persons in this

^s Maimon. *ibid.* prope initium, quod Cœlum ipsius in terram conversum sit, vel super terram ceciderit. ^t Judges v. 4, 5. ^u Ver. 20. ^x Isa. xiii. 10, 13. ^y Isa. xxxiv. 3, 4, 5. ^z Isa. xxxiv. 1, 18, 19, 20. ^a Jer. iv. 23, 24. See also Ezek. xxxviii. 20. ^b Joel ii. 10. ^c Ver. 28. ^d Acts ii. 17. ^e Acts ii. 19, 20. ^f Ezek. xxxii. 7, 8. ^g Matt. xxiv. 29.

world, are as so many assurances of his most dreadful judgments at the great day ^h.) Some of the like prophetic schemes of speech are explained in the same chapters, where they occur, by plainer expressions in the context; which is a certain key to the understanding of the like figurative or symbolical representations elsewhere: thus ⁱ, what is figuratively described by *the earth's being without form and void, and the heavens having no light, and all the hills being moved*, seems to be the same with what is plainly expressed in the context ^k, *the whole land shall be desolate*. And, ^l*I will shake the heavens and the earth*, is explained by the words immediately following, ^m*I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, &c.* On the other hand, when the prophets mention an expectancy of the ending of troubles, and the hopes of peace and prosperity, they sometimes express it by the continuance or increase of the light of the sun and moon; as, ⁿ*Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended*: and, ^o*the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound*. Though possibly, some of the aforementioned prophecies shall be more literally fulfilled in the great day of God's vengeance on the wicked world, and his rewarding his saints.

Remark VI. Some of the prophets, the better to prepare their minds for the prophetic inspiration, have made use of music; which, as it hath been of old experienced, is of great force either to stir up or allay the passions ^p. Hence we find, that Saul, being troubled with an evil spirit, was refreshed by David's playing on a harp before him ^q. Therefore, when the prophet Elisha was moved with anger against wicked Jehoram, king of Israel, yet being willing to assist and direct

^h Compare Amos viii. 9, 10. Mic. i. 3, 4. Hagg. ii. 6. Acts ii. 20. ⁱ Jer. iv. 23, 24. ^k Ver. 27. ^l Hagg. ii. 21. ^m Ver. 22. ⁿ Isa. lx. 20. ^o Isa. xxx. 26. ^p Grot. in 1 Sam. x. 5. To the same purpose Maimon. Mor. Nev. pars ii. cap. 36. *Propheta non habitat, neque inter tristitiam, neque inter pigritiam.* ^q 1 Sam. xvi. 23.

Jehoshaphat, the good king of Judah, he called for a minstrel, or musician, to recover himself out of the disorder into which Jehoram's presence had put him, and to render his mind the more sedate and calm, and so the more fit to be inspired with the spirit of prophecy: and the effect was accordingly, for *it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand, or spirit, of the Lord came upon him*, and he prophesied rain and a victory^r. It seems also that prophesying itself is used for singing praises to God in some extraordinary manner; which may be understood of the messengers of Saul, and of Saul also himself^s.

Remark VII. The prophets not only prophesied by word or writing, but also by symbolical actions, or signs, or mysterious representations, according to the custom of the eastern people, who were wont to express themselves by signs and actions, as well as words^t, to strike the more forcibly on the imagination. Thus Isaiah's going without his usual habit, was a sign of spoiling the Egyptians and Ethiopians^u. And Jeremiah's getting an earthen bottle, and breaking it, was a sign of the people's being broken and ruined^x. And the *bonds and yokes about his neck* were signs of the neighbouring kingdoms being subdued by Nebuchadnezzar^y. And Ezekiel's representation of a siege, and his miraculous *lying on his side* a long time, is said to be *a sign to the house of Israel*^z. It is observed further, that several things which are set down as matters of fact in the prophets, might not be actually done; but either inwardly set before the prophets in a prophetic vision by the Spirit, as some are of opinion, both Jews and Christians^a; or represented by the prophets in a parable^b, to make the greater impression on the hearers; as Ezekiel's being commanded to *set on a pot, and to make it boil*, &c. which is expressly called *a parable*^c. Both which

^r 2 Kings iii. 13, 14, 15. See also 1 Sam. x. 5, 6. ^s 1 Sam. xix. 20, &c.

^t See the latter end of the first general rule for understanding the Scripture, ut supra. ^u Isa. xx. 2, 3. ^x Jer. xix. 1, 10, 11. ^y Jer. xxvii. ^z Ezek. iv. 3, &c. xii. 18, 19, and xxi. 6, 7. 2 Kings xiii. 15—20. Acts xxi. 11.

^a Maimon. Mor. pars ii. cap. 46. p. 322. et Hieronym. proœmium in Hosea.

^b See the eleventh remark on the Gospels, concerning parables. ^c Ezek. xxiv. 3.

constructions seem favoured in Hosea, ^d *I have also spoken by the prophets, and I have multiplied visions*, (or forms deeply impressed on the imagination,) *and used similitudes* (or parables) *by the ministry of the prophets*. And thus we may interpret other places; as Jeremiah's *girdle* being commanded to be long *hid in a hole of a rock by Euphrates*, (too long a journey to be actually gone by the prophet,) represented, that the Jewish nation should be, like that girdle, spoiled and utterly ruined. So also Hosea's *marrying an adulteress*^e, to make the people sensible of their spiritual fornication, and going, as it were, a whoring after strange gods: not as if either Jeremiah or Hosea really outwardly acted in such manner, but that either such action was set before the prophets in a vision; or that they represented it to the hearers in a parable; as it was common to do among the eastern people, and the Jews especially, and whereby matters were wont to be set down, as in an history of things done, even with the circumstances of names and places, as in the parable of Abolah and Aholibah^f, and in Christ's parable of Dives and Lazarus^h.

Remark VIII. The prophets often mention things to come, as if present or past, because they were foreseen and pre-ordained of God, and as certain as if actually present: as Psalm xxii. in which the passion and crucifixion of Christ is set forth, as if then actually present, or past long before; so the birth of Christⁱ, and his sufferings and death^k. Frequent examples of this occur in the prophets. And not only did the prophets foretel many things, which were really then to come, in a manner as if they had been already past, (by reason of the certainty of them, as fore-ordained by God;) but because being exhibited, or set before the prophets, by God in a visionary dream, and often with divers circumstances, before their revealing them to men, such things were, in some regard to the prophets, as things already past^l.

^d Hosea xii. 10.

^e Jer. xiii. 1, &c.

^f Hos. i.

^g Ezek. xxiii.

^h Luke xvi. See at large Dr. Pocock on Hosea i. 2.

ⁱ Isa. ix. 6.

^k Isa. liii.

^l Vide Glass. Philolog. Sacr. lib. i. tract. 4. de Stylo prophetico, can. 4.

Remark IX. When the prophets are speaking of other matters, they are on a sudden, as it were, in an ecstacy, carried on from their first subject to prophesy of Christ the Messiah: thus David, being transported with an extraordinary joy^m, celebrated the glory and prosperity of his son Solomon, which he carried on in so high a strain, that the words had not a full accomplishment in Solomon, or any other, but Christ the Messiahⁿ. In like manner, as he celebrated his own establishment^o, he utters the famous prophecies of Christ's glorious kingdom^p. So also Isaiah^q is preaching to the Jews concerning their sin and punishment; and then presently^r he turns to the coming and spiritual kingdom of Christ. So also^s when he was speaking of the siege of Jerusalem, and God's deliverance from it, presently^t he prophesies that Christ should be born of a virgin. So in Jeremiah^u there is a prophecy of the dispersion of the Jews, and their return; and then^x of the coming of the Messiah of the seed of David. These transitions are frequent in the prophets. However, they do not argue, that their prophecies were not understood by themselves: this our Lord confuted, by saying, that many prophets had *desired to see and hear* those things which the Jews in his time did hear and see: but they could not desire what they were utterly ignorant of. But thus much we learn from this manner of the prophets, *viz.* that the foretelling the Messiah was the great design of them.

Remark X. It is evident, that the ancient idolaters did not set up their images as final objects of their worship, or as being gods in themselves^y, but as places of divine residence, wherein the genii, or spirits of the gods, were said to dwell, and afford their special presence, or as representatives of their gods, however the most ignorant and sottish of the people might otherwise conceive: but then it may be objected, that the prophets seem to upbraid the idolatrous Jews and Gentiles, in general, as worshippers of the very images and

^m Psal. lxxii. ⁿ Psal. lxxii. 5, 11, 17. ^o Psal. ii. ^p Psal. ii. 7, 8, 12.
^q Chap. i. ^r Chap. ii. ^s Chap. vii. 1, &c. ^t Ver. 14. ^u Chap. xxiii.
1, &c. ^x Ver. 5. ^y See the general Remarks on the Pentateuch, num. 7.

statues themselves, without further reference to any god or spirit that might influence them. They mocked them as worshippers of idols which had *eyes and saw not*, which their own hands had *made and formed*, and which could neither in themselves, nor from any supreme cause, have or dispense any virtue or assistance^z. One would be apt to conclude, from such scoffs of the prophets, that the idolaters made the very images themselves their ultimate or real gods. To this it may be answered, that however the idolaters conceived through rashness, in believing whatever the idol priests, or others, might suggest to them concerning the virtues and powers pretended to be in idols; yet if they would *shew themselves men*, if they would not have suffered their fancies to impose upon their understandings, but have *considered in their hearts*, or would have examined matters of fact with diligence and impartiality, they might have known that their images had no such divine virtue in them, but were, as they appeared to be, senseless matter, wood and stone; so that for want of examination, they did by interpretation make gold, silver, and stone their gods; and therefore the prophets might justly upbraid them for so doing^a.

Remark XI. The prophets describe the Jewish people by several particular names, by reason of the division of their kingdom, after the reign of Solomon. Thus the ten tribes being distinct from the other two, and under a different king, to the time of the Assyrian captivity, are sometimes called Samaria, and Ephraim, and sometimes Joseph, because the chief seat of the kings of Israel was the city of Samaria, in the tribe of Ephraim, who was the son of Joseph^b. They were also called Israel and Jacob, because they were the greater part of Israel's or Jacob's posterity. The other two tribes, consisting of that of Judah and Benjamin, are called the *kingdom of Judah*, the *house of David*, *Jerusalem*, or *Zion*^c, because they were of the tribe of Judah, (with that of Benjamin adjoining to it,) and adhered to the house or family

^z See Isa. xliv. 9, &c. and xlvi. 5—9. ^a Archbishop Tenison on Idolatry, chap. v. part 8. ^b Isa. vii. 2, 5, 8, 9. Psal. lxxxi. 5. Hos. vii. 11. Amos v. 15. and vi. 6. ^c Isa. vii. 13. and xl. 2. Psal. cxxvi. 1. Isa. lii. 8.

of David, their kings being of his posterity, and their chief seat was Jerusalem, with Zion therein: but after their return from the Babylonian captivity, Israel and Judah are taken promiscuously for the same people, *viz.* for the Jews, who returned from Babylon into Judea, and who, for the most part, were of the tribe of Judah; and those of other tribes, who returned with them, joined themselves to the tribe of Judah, and transferred their name to them. Whence they all, without any distinction, were sometimes called Israel, and sometimes Judah.

Remark XII. As for the imprecation in the prophets, the curses and judgments mentioned by them, as called for from heaven^d, we are to distinguish between private and public enemies, between private revenge and zeal for God's honour, and between the imprecations proceeding from the sinful passions and affections of men, and the impulse of the Spirit of God^e. Thus much for the general remarks on the prophets.

Of these prophets, Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, and Micah, were sent by God while both the kingdoms of Judah and Israel remained, as appears at the beginning of their prophecies. Joel also^f is supposed to prophesy about the same time with Hosea. He intimates that the temple-worship was remaining in his time,^g *Let the priests weep between the porch and the altar*; and by the *scattering of Israel*^h, he seems not to mean the ten tribes, but (as Israel is often understood in the prophets) he mentions it as a general term for the whole body of the Jewish people. Jeremiah and Zephaniah were sent after the Assyrians had destroyed the kingdom of Israel, but somewhat before the captivity of Judah by the Babylonians, *viz.* in the reign of Josiah king of Judah, as the beginnings of their prophecies shew. About that time, it is likely, Habakkuk prophesied, because he threatened the captivityⁱ. Daniel and Ezekiel were sent in the time of the captivity^k; Obadiah soon after it. Haggai and Zechariah after the return, in the second year of Darius Hystaspes^l. Malachi after their settlement, which appears not only because his prophecy is placed

^d Such as Jer. xviii. 21. Lam. i. 22, &c.

^e For which see what is said on the

Psalms.

^f Drusius et Grot. in Joel i. 1.

^g Chap. ii. 17.

^h Chap. iii. 2.

ⁱ Hab. i. 6.

^k Dan. i. Ezek. i.

^l Hagg. i. Zech. i.

last, but because he reproves the people for some crimes which they were especially noted to be guilty of, after the temple was rebuilt, and their commonwealth settled; as their marrying with strange wives^m. So also for grudging their tithesⁿ. Jonah and Nahum prophesied concerning some other people than the Jews and Israelites, *viz.* the Assyrians, and their city Nineveh. So that those prophets, which in the books of the Old Testament are placed next to Isaiah, were not next to him in order of time, only their prophecies were larger than the rest, and therefore are placed before the lesser.

CHAP. XVIII.

The particular Prophets, according to the time in which they were sent.

FOR the better understanding these prophets, we may briefly note what they chiefly design in the order they have been mentioned in, and also the most remarkable prophecies in each of them concerning our Lord Jesus Christ.

Isaiah foretold God's judgments, both against the kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians, and against the kingdom of Judah by the Chaldeans; but his prophecies relate chiefly to Judah. He foretold also the return of the people of Judah from the Babylonian captivity, and the destruction of the Babylonians themselves^a. Among other impieties of the Jews, (as their idolatry, injustice, oppression, pride, covetousness, intemperance, &c.) the prophet charges them frequently with a contempt of God, and his threats, chiefly occasioned by a vain reliance on the assistance of the king of Egypt, to deliver them from the Assyrian or Babylonian invasions, which they were threatened with by God^b. Isaiah also prophesied of the Messiah, or our Lord Jesus Christ; as, that he should be *born of a virgin*, and be called (*i. e.* according to the Hebrew language^c) *Immanuel*, or a divine person^d. Further, this

^m Mal. ii. 11. compared with Ezra x. 2. and Neh. xiii. 3, 23. ⁿ Mal. i. 6, 7, 13. and iii. 8. compared with Neh. xiii. 10. ^a See chap. xliii. xlv. xlv. xlv. xlvii. Compare what hath been said concerning Cyrus's victory over the Babylonians, and his demolishing their city; and also the Appendix, No. 11. ^b Isa. xxx. xxxi. &c. ^c Isa. i. 26. and lvi. 7. ^d Chap. vii. 14. This prophecy is the

prophet foretold that the Messiah should enlighten those who live in spiritual darkness, and be, in some sense, a wonderful glorious Prince, and of the family of king David^e; that he should work miracles in the cure of the *deaf*, and the *blind*, and the *lame*^f, and yet that he should be *a man of sorrows*, be *despised*, *wounded*, and at length *make his soul an offering for sin*, and be *cut off out of the land of the living*, be buried in his *grave*, and yet *prolong his days*, or gloriously rise again, and live for ever^g; that John Baptist should *prepare the way for him*^h, and that he should be revealed to the Gentiles, *i. e.* to other nations and people besides the Jewsⁱ. The prophet speaks of Christ in some of his forementioned texts, as if he were relating things already past, to shew the certainty of the accomplishment: wherefore he is called the evangelical prophet.

It appears from the several reigns^k, that he prophesied above forty years. His style is observed to be very elegant and lofty. It is the common tradition of the Jews, that the idolatrous king Manasseh ordered him^l to be put to a cruel death, that is, sawn in two; of whom several Christian writers understand that saying, ^m *they were sawn asunder*; a punishment elsewhere mentionedⁿ.

An Arabian historian notes^o, that Manasseh ordered him to be fastened in or between two wooden planks, and so sawn asunder.

Hosea prophesied against both the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, chiefly against Israel, threatening their destruction by the Assyrians, for their idolatry and other sins, and exhorting them to repentance, that they might find mercy. He foretold Christ's flying into Egypt^p, and his resurrection *the third day*^q. The prophet indeed says *he will raise us*, but that is,

more remarkable, as being made to support, not Ahaz alone, but the whole house of David, ver. 13. in their distress, because that family should be so far from being extinct, that the eternal King (Messiah) should proceed from it. ^e Isa. ix. 2, 6, 7. ^f Chap. xxxv. 4, 5, 6. ^g Chap. liii. throughout. ^h Chap. xl. 3. ⁱ Chap. xlix. 6. and lx. 3, &c. and lxx. 1. ^k Mentioned chap. i. 1. ^l Grot. on Heb. xi. 37. Prideaux's Connection, part i, an. 698. p. 23. ^m Heb. xi. 37. ⁿ 2 Sam. xii. 31. 1 Chron. xx. 3. ^o Hottinger, Thesaurus, lib. ii. cap. i. §. 2. p. 474. ^p Hos. xi. 1. ^q Chap. vi. 2. compared with 1 Cor. xv. 4.

because Christ being the head of the Christian church, the benefit redounds to us all. Hosea also prophecies, that a great number of the Israelites should be converted and received into the church under the Messiah; and also that the Gentiles[†], who believed in Christ, are true Israelites, and should become the people of God[‡]. He prophesied above forty years. See before of Isaiah.

Joel's prophecy was chiefly concerning the kingdom of Judah. He foretold calamities, as dearth and famine, &c. and exhorted them to repentance, that they might be delivered from them, whether the locusts[†] be meant literally, or signified the wasting nation of the Chaldeans[‡]. He prophesied in terms[§] usual with the old prophets, of the extraordinary effusion of the Holy Ghost at the first publishing of the Gospel[¶], and of the confusion and miseries of the enemies of Christ's church[‡]; and under the expressions of temporal gifts, his spiritual blessings on the same[§].

Amos, like Hosea, prophesied both against Judah and Israel, especially against the kingdom of Israel. This prophet having acquainted them, that their neighbouring enemies should be punished, (such as the Syrians, Philistines, Tyrians, Edomites, Amorites, and Moabites,) he after foretold the Israelites' captivity, and other miseries, by means of the Assyrians. He also prophesied of Christ's spiritual kingdom, and the flourishing state[¶] of the Christian church, both of Jews and Gentiles, under the terms of *raising up the tabernacle of David*, &c.^b Here we may observe, *first*, that it is the method of the Holy Ghost by the prophets, after threatening, to add promises and comforts; and to propound Christ the Messiah as the principal redress amidst all the dispersions and calamities of the Jews: wherefore St. Paul acquaints us, that Christ is the foundation of all the promises, which *in him are yea, and amen*, as standing firm in him^c.

[†] Pecoock in loc. [‡] Chap. i. 10. and ii. 23. compared with Rom. ix. 25. and
[§] i Pet. ii. 10. [¶] Joel i. 4. [‡] Joel i. 6. and ii. 2. [§] See the fourth and
fifth general Remarks on the Prophets. [¶] Joel ii. 28. [‡] Ver. 30, 31. ^a Joel
iii. 18, &c. ^b Amos ix. 11. and so on to the end of that chapter. ^c 2 Cor.
i. 20.

This prophecy of Amos is cited and applied in the Acts ^d. *Secondly*, That the temporal blessings on the ploughman and reaper, &c. mentioned in this prophecy, do figuratively set forth the spiritual blessings on Christ's church, when the Jews should believe in him, and both they and the Gentiles be united under one head.

Micah, like Isaiah, foretold both the captivity of the kingdom of Judah by the Babylonians, and also the destruction of the kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians, and the ruin of the chief city of each kingdom, *viz.* Jerusalem and Samaria; and all for their sins, which were encouraged by the princes, and priests, and false prophets. He also prophesied the Jews' happiness afterwards; and in prophetic ^e terms the establishment of the Christian church ^f. *Lastly*, He foretold the place of Christ's birth, *viz.* Bethlehem, and also his kingdom ^g. This prophet (as Isaiah) continued prophesying above forty years ^h.

Next to be considered are the other prophets, before mentioned, who were sent after the Assyrians had destroyed the kingdom of Israel, but before the captivity of the kingdom of Judah, *viz.* Jeremiah, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah.

Jeremiah was sent to those of the kingdom of Judah in the thirteenth year of king Josiah ⁱ, about three and twenty years before their first captivity under Jehoiakim, to instruct them in the fear of God, and to persuade them to speedy repentance, lest they should suffer like their brethren of the kingdom of Israel: and, as Isaiah had done before, he assures them, that they would be disappointed in their expectancy of help from the Egyptians, which they so much relied on, in contempt of God and his prophets ^k. The prophet also ^l speaks against Israel as well as Judah, although the kingdom of Israel had been destroyed before that time, both in regard to God's justice in destroying them, and for a warning to the kingdom of Judah, by their example: but not prevailing, he plainly denounced God's wrath, and foretold *the Babylonian*

^d Acts xv. 16. ^e See the fourth general Remark on the Prophets. ^f Chap. iv. 1, 2. ^g Chap. v. 2. ^h Chap. i. 1. ⁱ Chap. i. 2. ^k Chap. ii. 36, &c.
^l Chap. xxxvi. 2. and elsewhere.

captivity for seventy years^m. But for the comfort of those that feared God, he assured them of their return, after the seventy years should be expired; and that the Babylonians should be destroyed at last, and also the Moabites, Edomites, and Egyptiansⁿ, (as Isaiah had prophesied before:) whereby we are to understand, that as those conquerors were instruments in God's hands for the execution of his judgments, so afterwards he executed his justice upon them too. Thus much is expressly said of the Chaldeans and Babylonians^o, *viz.* that as Babylon was in his hands the *hammer of the whole earth*, so itself was to be *cut asunder and broken*. He suffered much, and was twice imprisoned on the account of prophesying such evil things, yet persisted in declaring to them, from time to time, to the very last, what destruction should fall on them. But as for the strict order of time, both Jews and Christians remark, that is not observed in this book of the prophecy of Jeremiah^p.

The prophet being still at Jerusalem, sent a letter^q to those who had been carried captive, before the last and general destruction, to persuade them to settle themselves, and live peaceably under the Chaldeans, till seventy years were accomplished, when they should return; but not to trust to some lying prophets among them, who might deceive them with hopes of deliverance before. Afterwards, when Pharaoh, king of Egypt, had obliged the Chaldeans to raise the siege of Jerusalem for the present, when they came against it, Jeremiah prophesied the Egyptians should return home, as they did, and that the Chaldeans should take the city and destroy it^r, as it came to pass.

He also prophesied of Christ, that, as to his human nature, he should come of the seed of David^s, and that he should make *a new covenant with Israel*^t, and *write his law in their hearts*, (instead of the outward carnal ordinances in the law of Moses,) and that the Christian church should flourish^u.

^m Chap. v. 15. xx. 4. and xxv. 8, &c. ⁿ Chap. xxix. 10. xxxii. 37. xlvi. 27, 28. and xlviii. xlix. 1, &c. ^o Chap. i. 23. ^p Hottinger. Thesaurus, lib. ii. cap. 1. §. 2. p. 477. ^q Chap. xxix. ^r Jer. xxxvii. ^s Chap. xxiii. 5. and xxxiii. 15. ^t Chap. xxxi. 31, 32, 33. ^u Chap. iii. 17.

When the city was destroyed, Jeremiah was preserved by God's providence from the common ruin; and was afterwards carried into Egypt, where he continued prophesying for some time ^x, both against those Jews who had fled thither, and the Egyptians themselves, and some other people aforementioned, more particularly the Babylonians. At length, he is said to have been stoned to death in Egypt, for his boldness in prophesying ^y.

The Lamentations were also written by Jeremiah, containing a mournful account of the state of Jerusalem, as destroyed by the Chaldeans. Some suppose it penned immediately after king Josiah's death, for whom it is expressly said, that *Jeremiah lamented* ^z, and that it is he who is called *the breath of our nostrils* ^a, who being taken out of the way, the prophet had the deplorable miseries of Jerusalem, as it were, before his eyes: but it is not certain who is meant by *the breath of our nostrils*, Josiah, or Zedekiah; nor whether this book be a prophecy of evils then to come, or rather a mournful description of present calamities, as several passages therein incline one to believe.

Habakkuk lived in corrupt times, but it is not known when; however, it must be before the Babylonian captivity; for he foretold the destruction of the kingdom of Judah by the Chaldeans, and the judgment of God upon those Chaldeans themselves at last ^b.

Zephaniah was sent about the same time with Jeremiah, as the beginning of his prophecy shews, to exhort the kingdom of Judah to an amendment of life, otherwise to denounce their destruction: yet he, as Jeremiah also did, prophesied a return from their captivity, and that their nation should be restored, and their enemies destroyed.

Daniel was one who was carried into Babylon, with some of the first captives, as aforesaid: where, by God's providence, he was preferred to honour, having a faculty given him

^x Chap. xliii. 6, &c. ^y Hieronym. adversus Jovianum, lib. ii. prope finem. Et Hottinger. Thesaurus, lib. ii. c. i. §. 2. p. 478. ^z 2 Chron. xxxv. 25. ^a Lament. iv. 20. ^b Chap. i. 5, 6. and ii. 8.

to interpret the king's dreams. His greatness raising envy in some principal courtiers, they contrived his being cast into a fiery furnace, and afterwards into the lions' den; but he was preserved, and they destroyed^c. It is said^d, that upon the king's signing the decree against the petitioning any for thirty days, save himself, *Daniel went into his house, and his windows being open in his chamber towards Jerusalem, he prayed and gave thanks before God, as he did aforetime*. The opening of his windows towards Jerusalem was according to the custom of the Jews, of worshipping God towards the temple, the place of God's peculiar presence: for which purpose, they had their oratories, or places for praying, in an upper room, with a hole or window opened that way; and when they were at a distance, the window was opened towards the city of Jerusalem, however towards the country of Judea. Thus, *I will worship towards thy holy temple*; which custom might be taken from Solomon's prayer^e, whereby their faith in God's promises being affixed to their city and temple, was confirmed^f. Hence possibly *the upper room* in Acts^h.

In Babylon he had visions relating to the four monarchies, or chief governments of the world, *viz.* the Assyrian or Chaldean, (which was in his own time,) the Persian, (or of the Medes and Persians,) the Grecian, and the Roman, by a representation of an image of four different metalsⁱ, and of four different beasts^k. After the succession of which four kingdoms, follows the kingdom of Christ; who is represented by *a stone cut out without hands*, (because he wanted no earthly assistance,) and as *breaking the image in pieces*, putting an end to those kingdoms, and establishing his own, which is to *fill the whole earth*, signified by *the stone becoming a great mountain*, and in some sort to remain *for ever*^l.

Daniel also foretold (near five hundred years beforehand) the punctual time which God had *determined* or allotted *for the people* of the Jews; at the expiration of which they should

^c Chap. i. ii. iii. vi. ^d Chap. vi. 10. ^e Psal. v. 7. ^f 1 Kings
viii. 44, 48. ^g Mr. Gregory's Notes and Observations, ch. iii. ^h Chap. xiii.
ⁱ Chap. ii. 31, &c. ^k Chap. vii. viii. ^l Chap. ii. 34, 35, 44.

be no longer his peculiar people, nor the once *holy city Jerusalem*, nor the Mosaical worship any longer owned as his peculiar city or worship; and then the *most Holy* should be *anointed*, the Messiah, or Christ, be manifested, to *finish the transgression*, restrain impiety by the Gospel, and to *make an end of sins*, by taking away the guilt thereof through his death, (instead of the Jewish offerings, which were to cease,) and thereby to *make reconciliation* with God the Father, and to *bring in everlasting righteousness*; not like that of the law, but of the Gospel, to endure for ever; and so to *seal up the vision and prophecy*, fully to complete and finish all that by former visions and prophecies had been revealed^m.

Which prophecy was thus occasioned: Daniel, having considered the seventy years' captivity foretold by Jeremiahⁿ, as then expiring, prayed for the deliverance of the people; God sent the angel Gabriel to confirm his hopes, and also to foretel the Messiah^o, the spiritual Deliverer of his church; that, *from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem*, to the Messiah, or Christ, it would be *seventy weeks*, that is, taking the seven days in each week for so many years^p, according to the prophetic style, seventy times seven, or four hundred and ninety years, as it came to pass^q. Further, the prophet here foretold that Messiah should be *cut off*, that Christ should suffer and die for his church, and after that, *the city of Jerusalem*, and *the sanctuary*, or temple, should be destroyed; and *the Jewish sacrifice and oblation cease*^r.

The latter part of this prophecy^s contains an account of further visions which Daniel had; as, first, concerning the Persians, who were to be conquered by *a mighty king*, viz. Alexander the Great: but after his death, his kingdom was to be *divided*, chiefly between *the king of the south*, that is, of Egypt, and *of the north*, that is, of Syria; one whereof

^m Chap. ix. 24, &c.

ⁿ Chap. xxix. 10.

^o See for the term Messiah,

what is said before on Gen. iii. 15.

^p So Lev. xxv. 8. *Seven sabbaths of years*

are *seven times seven years*. And in Ezek. iv. 6. *Each day for a year*.

^q Vide

Prideaux's Connection, vol. i. b. v.

^r Chap. ix. 26, 27.

^s Chap. x. to

the end.

(viz. Antiochus Epiphanes) should *have indignation against the covenant*, the Jewish people and religion, and *pollute the sanctuary*, and *take away the daily sacrifice*, and do great mischief. But afterwards the people should *be holpen*, (by the Maccabees, as we shall find they were in the remaining part of this history;) and at the last, all true and holy servants of God shall be happy and glorious for ever.

This prophecy, concerning the kings of Egypt and Syria, was so evidently fulfilled, that those who read the histories thereof in other authors (which are abridged in what hereafter follows) see it as plainly, as if the prophet had written of things already past.

Ezekiel (a priest) was carried into Babylon about eleven years before the general ruin and captivity of the whole body of the Jews; and being in Babylon, was first prepared for the calling of a prophet, and confirmed therein by a vision of cherubims and wheels, with a firmament above them, and a throne encircled with fire, which made *the appearance of the likeness of the glory of God*¹.

He had divers visions of God's judgments on the Jews; and was himself made a type or sign unto them thereof². He was also carried *by the spirit* in a *vision* to Jerusalem, and shewn the idolatries practised there; for which the inhabitants were to be severely punished; but to those who were already in captivity, and should renounce such wickedness, and serve God, he promised that God would be *a sanctuary unto them*, and cause them to return, and teach them his laws, and make them happy³. The prophet likewise fore-shews⁴, by various signs and parables, as well as plain expressions, the extreme miseries which should befall the prince, that is, Zedekiah, king of Jerusalem, and the remnant of his people, and the desolation of their land; and also threatens the vengeance of God upon their enemies at length, as the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, and Philistines, (because of their despite against, and insulting over the Jews in their dis-

¹ Chap. i. 28.

² Chap. iv. v. vi. vii.

³ Which is the substance of

chap. viii. ix. x. and xi.

⁴ In the following chapters.

dress,) with those of Tyre and Sidon, and Egypt; and promises in the end the restoration of the Jews.

The judgments here threatened to those places and people may be the better understood, by remembering, *1st*, That Tyre and Sidon were two neighbouring sea-port towns, rich, and famous for great trade and merchandizing. *2dly*, That in Egypt was the great river Nile, and that the Egyptians was like a broken reed, (on the banks thereof,) and disappointed the Jews when relying on their assistance; that the Babylonians executed the judgment on Egypt.

Ezekiel also prophesied of Christ^z. The latter part of his prophecy^a contains a vision for the comfort of the pious Jews in captivity, who mourned for the desolation of their city and temple, to put them in good hope of a return, and of the rebuilding of their temple, which they esteemed the glory of their nation, and a pledge of God's presence. This the prophet shews them would so certainly come to pass, that he sets before them, as in a type or figure, the dimensions of it, as if it had been already built. But because the temple, here represented in this vision to Ezekiel, is described as being far more noble and large than what was afterwards rebuilt at their return, this prophecy seems to aim at something further, *viz.* the vast extent, glory, and splendour that should be of the Christian church, of which Jerusalem and the temple was a type and figure.

This prophet is often called the *Son of Man*; which might be, to keep him from being too much exalted by the many heavenly visions which he saw. As to what the prophet declares^b, that the son should not suffer for his father's sins, which seems contrary to the threatening in the second commandment, of God's visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, see what is said before concerning the moral law, and the second commandment. Ezekiel is said to die in Babylon, and, by some, to be there slain by the captive Jews^c.

^z Chap. xxxiv. 23. and xxxvii. 22, 24.

^a From the beginning of chap. xl.

^b Chap. xviii. like Jer. xxxi. 29, 30.

^c Hottinger. Thes. lib. ii. cap. i. §. 2.

p. 480.

Obadiah prophesied against the Edomites, (the posterity of Esau, Jacob's brother,) because they insolently insulted over the calamities of the Jews, (who descended from Jacob,) whilst they were captives by the Babylonians. The prophet threatened the Edomites' destruction, whilst the Jews should be restored. He also prophesied of the Christian church, that *the kingdom* should be *the Lord's*^d.

Haggai and Zechariah prophesied after the return from the Babylonian captivity; and whereas too many of the people contented themselves with building them houses, and enjoying the fruits of the country, but neglected the setting up of God's house, these prophets rebuked them for that sin, and encouraged the rebuilding of the temple. They also prophesied of Christ, as being *the Desire of all nations*, whose appearing in *the latter house*, the second temple, would enoble it beyond the first^e; that he should be the *Branch*^f that was to come out of the *stem of Jesse*, (or the house of David, whose father Jesse was,) as Isaiah had also foretold^g; that he should come to *Jerusalem riding on an ass*^h, be sold for *thirty pieces of silver*ⁱ, and his side *pierced*^k; that he should be smitten, and *his sheep*, or apostles, *scattered*^l; and that he should *stand on the mount of Olives*^m. The prophecy above mentionedⁿ, of the thirty pieces of silver, is^o ascribed to Jeremiah; which might be, because the Jews placed Jeremiah first in the volume of the prophets^p; so that the whole volume had the title of *Jeremiah*; or, for this reason^q, as many words were spoken by Christ, which, St. John says, are not recorded, so, no doubt, it was with the prophets; and Jeremiah might speak these words, which were preserved either in some writing, or in memory, till Zechariah's time, who used other words of Jeremiah's besides these^r; whence the Jewish saying, *The spirit of Jeremiah was in Zechariah*; and so they were both as one prophet.

^d Ver. 21. ^e Hagg. ii. 7, 9. ^f Zech. iii. 8. ^g Isa. xi. 1.
^h Zech. ix. 9. ⁱ Chap. xi. 12, 13. ^k Chap. xii. 10. ^l Chap. xiii. 7.
^m Chap. xiv. 4. ⁿ Zech. xi. 12, 13. ^o Matt. xxvii. 9. ^p Lightf.
Hor. in Matt. xxvii. 9. ^q Grot. in Matt. xxvii. 9. ^r Compare Jer. xviii.
11, with Zech. i. 4. and Jer. xxiii. 5, with Zech. iii. 8.

Malachi prophesied after the Jews were settled, and their temple rebuilt; for he nowhere exhorts the Jews to the building of it, as Haggai and Zechariah did, but reproves the people of some disorders amongst them, and their ungrateful returns for God's kindnesses to them, in their deliverance from their late captivity. He foretold the forerunner John Baptist, who was to prepare the way for the Messiah^a; that he was to be a new Elijah, remarkable for his holiness, the austerity of his life, and for his authority, and zeal. This prophet also foretold our Lord Jesus Christ himself; that he should appear whilst the second temple was standing, and *come to that his temple*^b; and that the Gentiles should be converted^c, who should offer unto God *a pure offering*, adore and worship him with an acceptable service, a true spiritual worship, and particularly by celebrating the holy sacrament of the Lord's supper, according to his Son's institution, by the bread and wine, joined with prayers and thanksgivings^x. Here we may observe, that this prophet Malachi, whom the Jews style^y, *The seal of the prophets*, being the last of all which were to come till the times of Christ, shewed the first new prophet that was to come after him, that is, John Baptist, or Elijah, the forerunner of the Lord: until that time, it seems, the Jews were to expect no more prophets; which is somewhat above four hundred years^z.

As for those prophets who prophesied concerning other people than the Jews and Israelites, they were the two following:

Jonah was sent to forewarn Nineveh, or Ninus, the head city of the Assyrian empire. This prophet, being three days and three nights in the whale's belly, in a figure expressed how Christ should die, and rise again the third day^a.

Nahum also prophesied against the Ninevites, who had repented on Jonah's preaching^b, but returned again to their

^a Chap. iii. 1. and iv. 5, 6. ^t Chap. iii. 1. ^u Chap. i. 11. ^x See Mede's Christian Sacrifice; and Dr. Pocock in loc. ^y Flottinger, Thesaurus, lib. ii. cap. i. §. 2. p. 489. ^z Abp. Usher places Malachi sub A. M. 3589.

^a Jonah i. 17. compared with Matt. xii. 40.

^b Jonah iii. 5, &c.

sins. The prophet^y foretold to the Jews the revenge God would take on the Assyrians, for all their wrongs done to the ten tribes, whom they had carried away captive, by *making an utter end* of Nineveh, that once famous city of theirs, of three days' journey^z, which came to pass about one hundred and thirty-two years afterwards^a.

Thus much for the Prophets.

CHAP. XIX.

The Hagiographa, or Holy Writings.

THERE are five other books of the Old Testament, which are among those the Jews called *Hagiographa*, or *Holy Writings*, not yet accounted for; as the books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Canticles.

Job is supposed to have lived in the days of Jacob, and to be elder than Moses; for in this book there is no allusion to the Jewish religion or law, no mention of their deliverance out of Egypt, or settlement in Canaan: there is indeed mention made of offering burnt offerings^b; but they were such as were offered before the law of Moses was established, and are believed by the Jews to be only ancient sacrifices^c. Job is also represented as the priest to offer them, as being the master of his family, according to the manner of the Patriarchs before the law. His age also is more suitable to those elder times, for he lived an hundred and forty years after his troubles were over^d; so that he might be near or full two hundred years old when he died. His country, the land of Uz, is supposed to be part of Arabia the Desert; however, it must be near the Chaldeans, who plundered him.

That Job was not a feigned name, devised for example's sake, as in a parable, is evident, because the prophet mentions him as a real person^e, as doth also the apostle^f.

This Job was an example of holiness and patience, and trust

^y Nahum i. 2, 8. ^z Jonah iii. 3. ^a See Tobit xiv. 15. Compare Usser. Annal. A.M. 3378. ^b See Job i. 5. and xlii. 8. ^c Grot. in Job xlii. 8.

^d Job xlii. 16. ^e Ezek. xiv. 14. ^f Jam. v. 11.

in God, under the heaviest afflictions; which were brought on him, with God's permission, by the malicious accusations and cruelty of the devil. But it is here observable, that the devil could have no power over Job, (nor consequently can have over any other of God's servants,) without leave first obtained from God; and then could proceed no farther than he was permitted; as first, only to procure the loss of his goods and children, but not to hurt his person^r; and next, to afflict his person, but not to take away his life^h. His friends, by reason of his great sufferings, accused him of impiety and hypocrisy, for which they pretended God sent those judgments; but he rightly defended himself, and maintained his sincerity and godly conversation. However, in the heat of the dispute, and extremity of misery, some expressions fell from him that may be thought liable to exception, as the best men are subject to the passions and infirmities of human nature: to convince us of which, and to humble us, it is very probable those expressions might be recorded^l. In the close, God himself takes up the matter, declares his own providence and power in making and governing the world, and his righteousness and wisdom in his dealings with his servants. Job submits, and repents of any unseemly expressions or behaviour^k, and is approved of God, and at last restored to more abundant joy and plenty, for the encouragement of all God's servants, who submit patiently to the disposal of heaven, and firmly rely upon the divine power and goodness.

There are two passages in this book, which, because they have been applied to ill purposes, ought to be particularly taken notice of; as, ^l *Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth?* and, ^m *seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee: thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass*: whence some would persuade themselves and others, that they may live as they list, neglect their health, indulge those vices which corrupt their blood, and spoil their constitutions, such as gluttony, drunkenness,

^g Chap. i. ^h Chap. ii. ⁱ Especial'y chap. iii. ^k Particularly chap. xl. 3.
^{4.} and xlii. 6. ^l Chap. vii. 1. ^m Chap. xiv. 15.

and debauchery; or take such courses, whereby they may endanger their lives by the laws, yet their time being appointed, and their days determined, they shall not die the sooner: whereas these passages plainly appear to be understood, not as if every particular man's time were so strictly assigned him by God, that nothing could lengthen or shorten it, (though all things are foreknown to him, and so our behaviour, and the number of our months is too,) but in general, that whereas before the flood men lived many hundred years, and after the flood some held out a considerable time, yet now the general period of human life is fixed and determined by God to be much shorter, and which they shall not pass. But as for particular persons, it does not hereby appear that God has determined the time of their death by any absolute or unconditional decree: for if so, what can be the meaning of the promises of long life to pious persons, (where God sees best for them,) and the threatenings of cutting short the lives of the wicked? Such as, ⁿ *The fear of the Lord prolongeth days, but the years of the wicked shall be shortened*; and, ^o *The bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days*, or half the time which God has in general allowed men to live on the earth, and which he sometimes shortens to evil persons by some judgment or disease; at other times permits them to run into such methods of living, as cause their death: and on the other hand, sometimes takes away good men *from the evil to come*. In a word, as are all our concerns, so are our lives, in the hands of God. This exposition encourages our prayers in sickness or danger, &c. and also our continuance in the service of God; on which condition, all things, whether for life or death, shall work together for our good ^p.

The Psalms were composed by king David and other holy men, inspired by the holy Spirit of God ^q. They are in general called *the Psalms of David*, because he might compose the greatest part of them. However, some were of later date, as the hundred and thirty-seventh psalm was, no doubt, com-

ⁿ Prov. x. 27. So Exod. xx. 12. ^o Psal. lv. 23. ^p Grot. in Job xiv. 5.
Limborch. Theol. Christiana, lib. ii. cap. xxvi. num. 8, &c. and Sherlock on Death,
chap. iii. §. 1, 5. ^q Hottinger. Thesaurus, lib. ii. cap. i. §. 3. 495.

posed under the captivity in Babylon, and the hundred and twenty-sixth upon the people's return from thence. The whole book of them is acknowledged by Christ ^r, and called *the Psalms*; because, although there are many prayers and imprecations therein, yet this book consists chiefly of praises and hymns to God, as the present condition of the writers themselves, or the church of God, gave occasion for. Many of them were made use of to accompany the public service and the sacrifices, according to the appointment of David and Solomon ^s, which custom was restored by Ezra, after the return from the Babylonian captivity ^t.

Here, by the way, we may observe, that the composure of the Psalms, and other holy songs, which we read in the Old Testament, does not consist ^u either in the translation, or indeed in the original Hebrew, in the number and quantity of syllables, as other modern poetical composures do; but in a noble and figurative turn of thought, which is the very essence of poetry, in the height and elevation of the sense, and loftiness of the expressions, as some of the Jews observe; one instance of which may be the Song of Deborah and Barak ^x. However, they say that in the Scripture poetry there appears not only the sublime poetical style, but also a certain disposition of words in the original, which makes them melodious, and fit to be sung to musical instruments, and so sententious, that they might be more easily remembered than simple narrations, though now, after so many ages, they cannot be reduced to rules ^y.

These Psalms, some or other of them, are fit for all ages, young and old, and suitable to all conditions, whether we are troubled in conscience, and are afraid of God's anger, or have cause to lament under calamities and sorrow, or to give thanks for blessings, or to mourn for our sins, or to beg grace, or rejoice in our hopes in God's favour, &c.

So that by often reading of the Psalms, as the ancient

^r Luke xxiv. 44. ^s 1 Chron. vi. 31. and xvi. 7. 2 Chron. v. 12. ^t Ezra iii. 10, 11. ^u Bishop Patrick on Exod. xv. 1. Du Pin on the Canon of Scripture, b. i. c. iii. §. 11. ^x Judg. v. and more particularly verses 2, 3, 4, 5, 20, 21, 27, &c. to the end. ^y Bp. Patrick on Exod. xv. 1. Du Pin on the Canon of Scripture, b. i. c. 3. §. 11.

Christians were wont to do, with devotion and attention of mind, we shall find much spiritual consolation, whatever condition we are in. And thus the Christians of old exercised their religion, and glorified God, and solaced themselves: and it is a comfortable thought, that we employ ourselves in that way by which so many have gone to heaven in former ages. We should therefore endeavour to be affected in our mind, according as the matter is which we read, whether for imploring the grace of God, rejoicing in his salvation, praising his name, or bewailing sins past, and begging forgiveness, &c.

Again, the Book of Psalms contains many prophecies of Christ, as of his kingdom and glory under the history of David ^z, his death ^a, of his resurrection ^b, of his sitting at the right-hand of the Father ^c, and many more the like.

As for the temporal promises made to righteous persons, in several parts of this Book of Psalms, such as of peace and prosperity in this world, we are to observe, that these were literally suitable to the Jews' disposition, whom God encouraged in the observation of his laws with peculiar peace and prosperity in the land of Canaan, as hath been observed before: whereas now, under the Gospel dispensation, godliness indeed *hath the promise of this life, as well as of that which is to come*, but with an exception of the cross, when that may be best for us, in order to our future happiness in heaven: so that the promises under the Old Testament of a general felicity in this life, are not so literally to be applied to Christians as they were to the Jews.

Some are offended with the many imprecations in this book; such as, ^d *So persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm*: which expressions they conceive to be against charity and love, (teaching us to pray to God to send judgments on others,) and not suitable to the Gospel. But to this it may be answered, *first*, that it is often to be understood, *except wicked men repent*: and it is a great charity to pray that judgments may overtake ungodly men, in order to bring them to repentance, when nothing else would do it; and so it follows in the Psalm above referred to,

^z Psal. ii. ^a Psal. xxii. 1, 7, 8, 16, 18. and lxix. 21. ^b Psal. xvi. 10.
^c Psal. cx. 1. ^d Psal. lxxxiii. 15.

and the next verse, *Fill their faces with shame, that they may seek thy name, O Lord.* Secondly, Many of those expressions in the Book of Psalms are the predictions of prophets, and inspired persons, of what they foresaw would befall the enemies of God and religion, and all impenitent sinners; as those words in the same Psalm, *Let them be confounded, and perish,* may be read in the future sense, agreeable to the original Hebrew, they *shall* be confounded and perish, &c. Thus the Psalmist, by inspiration, denounces God's judgments and curses against impenitent offendersⁱ, of which^g this is expressly applied to Judas, *For it is written in the Book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein*^h. And what is said by way of wishingⁱ, *Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones,* is expressed by the prophet in a manner of foretelling it^k; speaking concerning the same people, the Babylonians, *their children also shall be dashed to pieces.* Further, it is no breach of charity to pray that righteous men may flourish, and that hardened and ungodly persons be rather cut off, than suffered to do more mischief, especially the enemies of the true religion, as the imprecations in the Psalms are generally meant against the enemies of the Jewish church; and certainly in such case it is as lawful, and as consistent with charity, to pray against such malefactors, as to inflict punishment on them. *Lastly,* As for the most exceptionable expression^l, *Let them go down quick into hell:* by *hell* is here meant, according to the original^m, not the place of the damned, but the *grave*, (as it is marked in the margin of our Bibles,) the latter words of the verse being of the same sense with the former, only differently expressed, *Let death seize upon them, and let them suddenly go down to the grave,* before they accomplish their wicked designs.

The Proverbs of Solomon contain many wise and holy sentences or maxims, tending to the encouragement of virtue

^e Psal. lxxxiii. 17. ^f Psal. lxxix. ^g Ver. 25. ^h Acts i. 20. ⁱ Psal. cxxxvii. 9. ^k Isa. xiii. 16. ^l Psal. lv. 15. ^m *Sheol* significat in genere locum corporum humanorum post mortem, unde communiter pro sepulchro, et interdum etiam pro inferno ponitur. Buxtorf. in v. *Shaal*.

and piety, and suppressing vice, from the consideration of the fear of God, the rewards of piety, and the punishment of iniquity. In this book, Solomon mentions the *wise* and *fools*; which words are not always to be taken strictly, but in a larger sense; for by *wisdom* he often understands *virtue and goodness*, and also makes every degree of vice and impiety, as well as of ignorance and indiscretion, to come under the notion of *folly*. And indeed, as the fear of the Lord is the truest *wisdom*, because religion is of the greatest consequence to us, either for this world or the next, and in order to our never-ending state; so there is no fool like the sinner, who every day ventures an everlasting condition, and for a trifle of worldly interest or pleasure, forfeits the greatest interest and happiness, which would be the fruits of the fear and favour of God. The 30th chapter of this book is said to contain *the words of Agur*, which are inserted among Solomon's Proverbs, either because of the likeness of the matter, or because collected by Solomon. In the last chapter, by king Lemuel is probably meant Solomon himself, who might be called Lemuel, which is interpreted *belonging to God*, as well as Jedidiah, which signifies *beloved of God*ⁿ. However, these two chapters, as well as the rest of the book, are inspired writings, because they make a part of the canon of Scripture, which was received by the Jewish church, and so are part of all that Scripture which the Apostle says is given by inspiration of God^o.

Ecclesiastes, or the book of the Preacher, was written by Solomon, to discover the vanity of the world, and the insufficiency of knowledge, riches, or honour, greatness, or power, worldly enjoyments, or any thing on earth, to satisfy us, or make us happy, as king Solomon, after much trial, fully experienced: the consideration of which should cause us not to depend on, or promise ourselves true satisfaction here, but should engage us in time, before *the evil days* of age or sickness come, to *fear God, and keep his commandments*, and thereby to prepare for another world, and our appearance at the last day before that God, who *will bring every work into*

ⁿ 2 Sam. xii. 25.

^o 2 Tim. iii. 16.

judgment, according to the conclusion of this excellent book; the frequent reading and consideration whereof would be a great means to keep us from setting our hearts on any thing in this world, which too many do, and find themselves miserably disappointed at the last; who, when they have spent the best of their time and strength in the eager pursuit after honour, wealth, or pleasure, are at length obliged to acknowledge that *all is vanity and vexation of spirit*.

There are some passages in this book, with which, for want of observing the chief design and scope of it, above mentioned, vain and lewd persons would fain encourage themselves in their follies and impiety. For instance, ^v*That which befalleth the sons of men, befalleth beasts: as the one dieth, so dieth the other: and who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?* as if the end of man and beasts were the same; and therefore they may lead sensual lives, without concern for the future, as the beasts do: whereas Solomon, speaking of *the estate of the sons of men*[¶], not in the next world, but in this, pursues his chief scope, in shewing the vanity of earthly things and designs; that whatever content or satisfaction men may propose to themselves in this world, all is but vanity; that they are, in many respects, like beasts; they draw in the same air, their breath will fail them, and they shall die, and be turned to dust, as well as the beasts: yea, so vain is man, and so like the beasts to outward appearance, that although when he dieth, (as Solomon plainly asserts,) *his spirit shall return to God, and he shall be judged*, in order to be rewarded suitably to his deeds[†]; yet no one *knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upwards*, &c. *i. e.* no one can experimentally, or by sense or reasoning[‡], discern a man's soul, which ascends or goes upwards, any more than that of the beast, which descends or goes downwards; so great is man's ignorance of such matters. This thought should humble us, and wean us from too much care for the future,

^v Eccles. iii. 19, &c.

[¶] Ver. 18.

[†] Eccles. iii. 17. and xii. 7, 14.

[‡] *Homo sola nativa ratione nihil de eo comperti habet: ostendunt id Socratis, Tullii, Senecæ dubitationes.* Grot. in loc.

and make us to thank God for our portion in this world, to do good with it to others, and to enjoy it without solicitude; for there is no foreseeing what use our heirs, or others, will make of it hereafter; *for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him*^t? but withal, not to forget that God shall *judge the righteous and the wicked*^u. So likewise ^x Solomon says of the dead, *neither have they any more a reward*; but he does not mean, that there is no reward after death for the righteous in heaven, but that after death there will be no enjoyment of any worldly felicity, as he explains himself in the next verse, *neither have they any more a portion for ever, in any thing that is under the sun*.

The Song of Solomon, or the Canticles, (styled *the Song of Songs*, or the most excellent Song,) contains, under the parable of a man's affections to his love or spouse, the ardent tender love of God to his church and people. This book the Jews themselves acknowledge is to be understood in a holy or religious sense^y, and therefore Christians rightly apply the tender expressions therein to the divine love of Christ for the members of his church, and their return of affection to him, and concern for any danger of losing his favour, and also their spiritual joy in retaining it. Thus much for the history of the Old Testament, and the design of the several books thereof.

CHAP. XX.

The State of the Jews, from the rebuilding of their Temple, and Settlement after their Return from the Babylonian Captivity, (where the Scripture leaves off,) to their being made subject under the Romans; taken for the most part from the Writer of the Maccabees, and from Josephus; of which Authors, an account is given in the Epistle to the Reader.

AFTER the return from the Babylonian captivity, and settlement in their own land, the high priest, with the as-

^t Chap. iii. 12, 22.

^u Chap. iii. 17.

^x Chap. ix. 5.

^y Hotting.

Thes. lib. ii. c. i. §. 3. p. 490. St. Jerome says, that the Jews allowed none to read the beginning of Genesis, the first and last part of Ezekiel, or the Canticles, but those who were thirty years of age. In P'raefat. ad Ezek.

sistance of the Sanhedrim, that is, the council of the elders, governed them until the Maccabees' time, (as it hath been said before ;) but still they were in subjection to the Persians as their chief lords, and for a long time enjoyed much peace and prosperity, though with some interruption, namely, for about three hundred and sixty years, till their sufferings under Antiochus Epiphanes.

One remarkable thing which happened (as some compute ^a, about two hundred and four years) after their return, was the building of a temple on mount Gerizim, near Samaria. On this occasion, (according to ^b Josephus,) Manasses, brother to Jaddus the high-priest, had married, contrary to the law, a daughter of a stranger, *viz.* of Sanballat, governor of Samaria, and being unwilling to quit his wife, his father-in-law Sanballat (having revolted from Darius) procured leave of Alexander (who was then pursuing his conquests in those parts) to build a temple on mount Gerizim aforesaid, and to make Manasses the high-priest thereof. Here the Samaritans (of whom we have spoken before) had their succeeding high-priests and sacrifices, in opposition to the temple and religious worship of the Jews at Jerusalem ; which was the occasion of a schism, whilst those, who were under any discontent at Jerusalem, went over to Manasses^c. All this the more occasioned the hatred, differences, and animosities between the Jews of Judea, and the Samaritans. Yet, by this means, and at this time, it is believed, the Samaritans ^d were brought to cast off all their idol gods, and to worship the God of Israel only : for now the Samaritans did not only, as before, consist of those Cutheans, and others which were planted in their country, when the Israelites were carried away captive, but also became a mixed people, (of Jews, who came over to them, as hath been now said, and the old Samaritans,) and they had also among them one of the sons of Aaron to be

^a Usser. sub A. M. 3672.

^b Antiq. book xi. ch. 8. But Dean Prideaux, from Neh. xiii. 28. where Sanballat is mention'd, supposes Darius Nothus to have given leave for the building of this temple above seventy years before. See the Old and New Testament connected, part i. book vi. sub an. 409.

^c Joseph. Ant. b. xi. c. 8. ^d Mede, book i. disc. xii. p. 48.

their chief priest. This anti-temple is said to stand till about two hundred years; and though it was then destroyed by Hyrcanus^e, one of the Maccabees, yet the Samaritans continued their worship and sacrifices on that mount Gerizim, where their temple had been. This explains the Samaritan woman's discourse with our Saviour^f, concerning the *Jews having no dealings with the Samaritans*^g, that is, not so as to be obliged for any kindness received from them, as Christ asked water of her; and concerning the great controversy between the Jews and the Samaritans in Christ's time, about the place of worship, whether at mount Gerizim in Samaria, where the Samaritans, or mount Moriah in Jerusalem, where the Jews, had their temple^h.

About two hundred and four years after their return, the Jews became subject to Alexander the Great, of Macedon in Greece, who conquered the Persians, and translated the monarchy of the world from the Medes and Persians to the Greeks. He permitted them their own laws and religion in peace and quietness, with an exemption from the 'seventh year's tribute, when their land was not sown; and that on this occasion, when he was engaged in the siege of Tyre, he sent to the neighbouring Jews to supply his army with provisions, (as it seems they had afforded to Darius,) which they refusing, he designed to be revenged on them; and to that purpose, marching against Jerusalem^k, the high-priest, with other attendants, being admonished by a vision, met him in his priestly ornaments, and prevented their destruction: for as soon as Alexander saw him, he fell down before him, and declared that a person, by divine appointment, had appeared to him in that shape some time ago in a dream, and encouraged him to set forward against the Persians. The high-priest also shewed him out of the prophecy of Daniel^l, that a Grecian should come and vanquish the Persians.

^e Joseph. Antiq. book xiii. chap. 17. ^f John iv. 9. ^g Lightf. in loc. and Prideaux's Connection, part i. b. vi. an. 409. ^h Lightfoot in loc. and Prideaux's Connection, part i. b. vi. an. 409. See also John iv. 20. ^l This shews that their captivity had taught them now better to observe God's laws, and in particular the sabbatical year spoken of before. ^k Joseph. Antiq. book xi. ch. 8. ^l Chap. viii. 20, 21, 22. and xi. 2, 3.

Upon this he favoured the Jews, offered sacrifices to God in the temple, and permitted them their own laws and religion^m.

Soon afterwards, having built Alexandria in Egypt, he invited a great many of them to settle there, and gave them all the freedom and privileges of his new cityⁿ. At length having made a conquest of great part of the world, which was then discovered, he came to Babylon, and there gave himself up to such extravagant gluttony and drunkenness, that it put an end to his life^o. Alexander being dead, his chief officers, in a little time, shared his vast dominions; according to the prophecy of Daniel^p, *His kingdom shall be broken, and be divided, but not to his posterity*: more particularly, the empire became divided between four, whereby was fulfilled that other prophecy of Daniel^q, that *the great horn (viz. Alexander) being broken, four horns stood up for it*, that is, as it is there said, *four kingdoms*.

These four of Alexander's generals were, at the first, esteemed only as governors of their respective provinces, and, as it is said, according to Alexander's appointment in his life-time^r; but they soon made war upon each other, and acted separately as kings^s. Among these four, the countries of Syria, Judea, and Phœnicia, fell to Laomedon's share: Ptolemy, son of Lagus, surnamed Soter, had gotten Egypt^t; and for the better security and defence thereof, coveted to make himself master of Laomedon's countries, that is, Syria, Phœnicia, and Judea. But the Jews would not easily submit, nor break their faith with Laomedon, till Ptolemy, having gotten possession of most part of their country, surprised Jerusalem on the sabbath-day, when the Jews would not defend themselves, and transplanted divers colonies of captive Jews (to the number of one hundred thousand) into Egypt, particularly a great number into Alexandria: where soon afterwards, reflecting on their fidelity to their former governors, he employed many in his army and garrisons, and

^m Joseph. Antiq. book xi. chap. 8.

ⁿ Josephus's Wars, book ii. chap. 21.

^o Usseii Annal. A. M. 3681.

^p Chap. xi. 4.

^q Chap. viii. 21, 22.

^r 1 Maccab. i. 6.

^s Diodorus, Justin. et Q. Curtius apud Usseii Annal. A. M.

3681, fere ad finem.

^t Ibid.

granted them all large immunities and privileges. The Jews were also favoured in their own country, and lived tolerably under their new masters the Egyptian kings^u.

The next of these kings of Egypt, *viz.* Ptolemy Philadelphus, son to the former, having built a famous library at Alexandria, furnished it with the choicest books; and among the rest, with the holy Scriptures of the Old Testament, being translated out of the original Hebrew into the Greek language, as it is said, by the labour of seventy-two learned Jews, procured by him for that purpose: whence this translation is called the Septuagint, taking the round number of seventy instead of seventy-two. However this was, the translation itself seems to have been ordered by the Divine Providence for some time before Christ's appearance; for by the help thereof, many Jews dispersed among the Greeks, and using their language, and also the Greeks and other heathens in the apostles' days, were made acquainted with the types and prophecies of Christ, and so were the sooner converted. This translation the apostles, for the most part, used * in quoting texts out of the Old Testament, (though not altogether in the same words, but according to the sense,) because in their times it was best known, and was in greatest authority among the dispersed Jews^v.

There have been great controversies concerning the particular authors of this translation, and the exact time when it was made: Josephus and some other Jews, from Aristeas the first author, only mention the Jewish law to have been then translated^z: and further, Josephus says, "The king had not the whole Scripture given him, but only the law^a;" which, a good judge observes, is rendered more conformable to the Hebrew, than the rest of the Old Testament^b. Accordingly, a very learned and inquisitive person^c concludes, that the law, or the books of Moses only, were translated at the first; and

^u Usseii Annal. A. M. 3684. compare Joseph. Ant. book xii. c. 1. ^x Hottinger. Thesaurus, b. i. c. 3. §. 3. p. 332. compare Heb. xii. 6. with Prov. iii. 12.
^v Hotting. Thes. lib. i. cap. 3. §. 3. quæst. 12. p. 335, &c. ^z Antiq. book i. chap. i. [Græc. Proœmium.] ^a Jos. Ant. b. i. c. 1. ^b Hieron. Proœm. in Quæst. in Gen. ^c Dupin on the Canon, b. i. c. 6.

the other books of the Old Testament afterwards, by other authors, yet before the time of Christ; because the Evangelists and Apostles, for the most part, quote the other books, according to the Greek version which we now have ^d. *Lastly*, Since the compilers of that translation had better opportunities of knowing the propriety and extent of the Hebrew tongue, than we can have at this distance, there is the more regard to be had to their translation.

After the Jews had been, for about one hundred years, subject to the Egyptian kings, there happened a war between Antiochus, called *the great*, king of Syria, and the Egyptians, each contending for divers countries in Syria: the Jews, whose country lay betwixt the two kingdoms of Egypt and Syria, suffered much on both sides, sometimes by the Egyptians, sometimes by the Syrians: so that (as the historian observes) “they fared like a ship tossed in a storm, which is battered and dashed between two billows ^e.” In the end, Antiochus, king of Syria, prevailed; and having subdued Samaria, the Jews, upon that success, of their own accord rendered themselves to him, and then they enjoyed a calm, and were ^f favoured with “permission to live and govern themselves according to their country laws.”

At length, one of the kings of Syria, *viz.* Antiochus, surnamed Epiphanes, under whom the Jews were then in subjection, occasioned very heavy calamities to fall upon them: and in the first place, being in want of money, for a large sum paid him by Jason, brother to Onias, the high-priest, (who in those times had the temporal as well as spiritual authority,) consented that Onias should be displaced, and Jason put in his room ^g. (Josephus observes, that whereas the high-priesthood was an office for life, Antiochus first, and afterwards Aristobulus, and then Herod, broke in upon that rule,

^d Dean Prideaux having distinctly considered the several authorities produced for the Seventy's translation, concludes, that there was indeed a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, made at the time when the Ptolemies reigned in Egypt, and put into their library, and which we still have; but that it was produced by the Jews in Alexandria for their own use. *Connect.* p. ii. b. 1. ^e Joseph. *Antiq.* b. xii. c. 3. ^f *Ibid.* ^g 2 *Maccab.* iv. 7.

and made it arbitrary^h.) Jason, being a very ill man, as soon as he had thus gotten to be high-priest, profanely changed the Jewish customs, and brought in Greek and heathen fashions, especially among the younger sort; which occasioned a neglect of the wonted attendance on the service of God, even among the priests, for the sake of being partakers of the heathenish sports and exercisesⁱ. By reason whereof their historian observes, that *sore calamities fell upon them*^k, as it came to pass shortly after; for Antiochus, being then in Egypt, (which he also had in great measure subdued,) apprehended that the Jews had revolted, (among whom there had been some tumults, by reason of a false report of Antiochus's death, and also upon Jason's usurpations on them :) whereupon he came furiously on the city of Jerusalem, killed eighty thousand of men, women, and children, sold as many for slaves, polluted and plundered the temple, abolished the worship of the true God, forbidding the daily sacrifice for three years and a half, compelled many to sacrifice unto idols, and to eat forbidden meat, and made great slaughters among them who refused, sparing neither age nor sex^l. This came to pass three hundred and sixty-six years after their return from Babylon, according as it had been foretold by Daniel^m, that he (the king of the north, that is, of Syria, this Antiochus) should *have indignation against the holy covenant, and pollute the sanctuary of strength, and take away the daily sacrifice, &c.* This dreadful calamity had been foreboded some time before, by strange lights in the air for forty days together, of troops of horsemen encountering each otherⁿ.

The Samaritans now disowned their relation to the Jews, and their religious rites, and dedicated their temple on mount Gerizim to the heathen god Jupiter^o.

In this distress, God raised up Mattathias, one of the priests, and head of the family of the Asmoneans, to assist and protect

^h Antiq. book xv. chap. iii. at the beginning. ⁱ 2 Maccab. iv. What became of Jason afterwards may be seen 2 Maccab. v. ^k 2 Maccab. iv. ^l See 1 Maccab. i. and 2 Maccab. v. 6, &c. ^m Chap. xi. 30, 31. ⁿ 2 Maccab. v. 1, 2. ^o Joseph. Antiq. b. xii. ch. 7.

his brethren the Jews^p. He soon died, but left his son Judas, surnamed Maccabeus, from Maccabi, a feigned word, which he chose for the motto of his standard, (being formed of the first letters of each word, of the Hebrew text^q, which in our translation is, *Who is like unto thee among the gods, O Lord?* or Jehovah;) the first letters of which words in the Hebrew are such as answer to our M C B I^r. This Judas Maccabeus undertook the cause, headed the people, and overthrew the Syrians, purged the temple, and restored the ancient worship of God, (somewhat above an hundred and sixty years before Christ,) after it had been omitted above three years; which was also foretold by Daniel^s; *The people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits; when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help, &c.* This was the rise of the Maccabees, so called from the aforesaid Judas Maccabeus: they were also called Asmoneans, from Asmoneus, of whose family Mattathias sprung. Judas having heard much of the fame and power of the Romans, who at that time were become very considerable, endeavoured to establish himself, and secure the government for the future, by entering into an alliance with them, which was confirmed by a decree of the Roman senate, and continued many years; which alliance, Josephus observes^t, was the first the Jews ever made with the Romans. From this time the family of the Maccabees successively bore the chief sway over the Jews, (till Pompey made them subject to the Romans, somewhat more than an hundred years after,) defended them against their enemies, asserted their liberty, and preserved in great measure their laws and religion, though with considerable loss and oppressions sometimes^u. After six years, Judas being slain, his brother Jonathan succeeded in the government^x, and also was made high-priest^y; which office

^p Vide Grot. de Jure Belli et Pacis, lib. i. c. iv. §. 7. numb. 5. ^q Exod. xv. 11.

^r Vide Grot. Præfat. in 1 Maccab. aliter Hotting. Thesaur. lib. ii. cap. ii. de Libris Apocryphis, p. 528. ^s Chap. xi. 32, 34. ^t 1 Maccab. viii. Joseph. Antiq.

b. xii. ch. 17. at the end. The Romans having a great part of Asia delivered to them twenty-eight years before, on their victory over Antiochus, king of Syria. See Usser. A. M. 3815. ^u See 1 Maccab. iii. &c. Joseph. Antiq. b. xii. ch. 8, &c.

^x 1 Macc. ix. 31. ^y Joseph. ib. b. xiii. ch. 5.

of the high-priesthood continued in the Asmonean family, who were esteemed as princes and high-priests too, (so was² Hircanus the Second,) till Herod the Great.

Aristobulus, one of these Maccabees, caused himself to be crowned, and was the first king of Judah^a, after the Babylonian captivity, who changed the principality into a monarchy.

One principle of their religion had like to have destroyed them utterly at the beginning of their deliverance, which was to observe the sabbath so strictly, as if it were unlawful thereon to defend themselves; which their enemies understanding, took the advantage of, and destroyed great numbers of them on that day, without resistance: upon which Matathias, above mentioned, instructed them, that for the future they were to defend themselves upon the sabbath, as well as upon another day^b.

To preserve in memory the purging of the temple, and restoring the altar and the daily sacrifice by Judas and his followers, the Jews ordained a feast of eight days, called *the feast of the dedication*, to be yearly observed^c, at which Christ in his time vouchsafed his presence^d.

Here, as we may reflect on God's correcting his people for their sins, so also on his justice upon their cruel enemies; for Antiochus, above mentioned, was soon after smitten by God with an incurable and invisible plague, and died miserably, acknowledging that "he was justly punished for the sake of the Jews, for the sacrilegious rifling and profaning of their temple, and for the contempt of God^e."

CHAP. XXI.

From the Jews' subjection under the Romans, to the death of Herod.

THE Maccabees having continued somewhat above one hundred years, there happened afterwards another new change in the government; for the Romans having by their arms over-

^z Joseph. Antiq. b. xiii. chap. 24. and b. xiv. chap. 1, 2. ^a Joseph. Antiq. b. xiii. chap. 19. ^b Joseph. Antiq. b. xii. c. 8. ^c 1 Maccab. iv. 59. ^d John x. 22. ^e 2 Maccab. xi. Joseph. Antiq. b. xii. chap. 13.

come a great part of the world, amongst the rest Pompey, one of their generals, made the Jews subject to them; which was occasioned^a by a quarrel between two brothers, princes of the Maccabees, Hyrcanus II. and Aristobulus, who both appealed to Pompey, being at that time in Syria, (which he had lately subdued to the Romans,) each of them striving to gain the interest of so great a general, and thereby of the whole Roman power. Pompey, conceiving some danger from Aristobulus, who was making preparation for a defence, marched against him, and was^b admitted by one party, who were of his side, into the city of Jerusalem, whilst the other party, being Aristobulus's followers, had seized the temple, which Pompey took by storm, after a siege of three months, taking the advantage of the sabbath day for the carrying on his works against it: when, although the Jews might defend themselves, (according to the instruction of Mattathias, above mentioned,) yet they would do no work to hinder the enemies advancing their bulwarks, and fixing their engines of war. Pompey made a great slaughter of the priests and other Jews in the temple, to the number of twelve thousand, and profaned it by entering into the holy of holies, where only the high-priest was to be admitted; but suffered not the soldiers to plunder it: and having restored Hyrcanus to the high-priesthood and the government, (subject nevertheless to the Roman power,) he carried Aristobulus prisoner to Rome, and brought the whole country of Judea under subjection^c. From that time the Jews became subject and tributary to the Romans: upon which Josephus^d makes the following remark; "From this feud between Hyrcanus and Aristobulus we may date the ruin of Jerusalem, with the loss of our liberty to the Romans, the imposition of above ten thousand talents, and the translation of the sovereign power, which had ever, till then, descended in the priesthood, to the commonalty." In like manner afterwards, exhorting them not to resist the Roman power; "Whence," says he^e, "are we to date our slavery, but from

^a Joseph. Antiq. b. xiv. ch. 5, 6, 7, 8. and of Wars, b. i. ch. 5. ^b Dion. Cas. lib. xxxvii. p. 41. and Joseph. ib. ^c Dion. Cas. lib. xxxvii. p. 57. and Joseph. ibid. ^d Jos. Antiq. b. xiv. ch. 8. ^e Joseph. Wars, b. vi. chap. 11.

our own seditious countrymen ; when the two factions of Aristobulus and Hyrcanus, in ambitious heat of competition, brought Pompey into the city, and made the Jews, who were unworthy of liberty, slaves to the Romans ?”

This loss of their liberty the Jews ever afterwards took most heinously ; because they esteemed it to be their grand privilege, that, God having given their country to their forefathers, they were a free people^f, and “ought to disclaim the Romans, or any other lord and master than God himself :” and on this pretence, the zealots among them endeavoured, on all occasions, to inflame the rest to a resistance of the Romans, till they were utterly destroyed : insomuch that when they were besieged by Titus, “they declared their contempt of death, and how much their liberty was dearer to them than their lives^g.” From hence arose that question, whether it was *lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar*^h? the payment of tribute being esteemed by them as a token of subjection and slavery. And hence probably St. Paul’s charge to the Christian church at Rome, (which consisted of converted Jews, with others,) to *submit themselves to every ordinance of man*ⁱ; and St. Peter taught them so to esteem themselves *free, as not using their liberty for a cloak of maliciousness*^k, or as a pretence of rebellion against the Roman governors. Much to the like purpose Josephus advised the Jews, his countrymen, when they were actually in arms against the Romans ; “It is a glorious cause, it is true, when liberty is the question ; provided it be early enough, and before that liberty is either forfeited, or lost. But for people to talk of shaking off the yoke, after they have once submitted to it, and continued in that obedience till they became subjects by prescription, this is not the way to live free, but rather to die with infamy^l.”

Thus much on the occasion of Pompey’s subjecting the Jews to the Romans : whereby we may conceive the notion

^f Jos. Wars, book vii. chap. 28. Gr. c. viii. 5. ^g Ibid. book vi. chap. 12.
^h Gr. v. 11. ⁱ Matt. xxiii. 17. ^j Rom. xiii. ^k 1 Pet. ii. 16. ^l Jos.
Wars, book vi. chap. 11. Gr. v. 8, 9.

the Jews had of their liberty, but withal their mistaken zeal and misfortune in the manner of defending it.

Some little time after they were subdued by Pompey, another great calamity befel them. For though Pompey had spared to rife the temple, yet Crassus, (whom the Romans had constituted president of Syria, a part of which province was the Jews' country,) "being upon the preparative for a war with the Parthians, came to Judea, and seized on the two thousand talents which Pompey had left in the temple, and also pillaged the temple of all the treasure he could lay hold on, to the value of eight thousand talents^m." This was the greater mortification to the Jews, because that treasure was what they had been many ages getting together, being "the donatives and oblations sent from all quarters of the world, wherever the worship of the true God was known";ⁿ that is, in all parts where the Jews and proselytes lived; and they were dispersed up and down the whole world then known, there being "hardly any habitable part, where they had not got footing and a settlement."

Hyrchanus, being restored by Pompey, continued high-priest, and governor of the Jews, (though accountable to the Romans,) till about twenty years afterwards; when Antigonus (son of Aristobulus before mentioned, whom Pompey's faction had dispatched by poison) occasioned^o new commotions and devastations: for having obtained aid from the Parthians, he got the possession of Jerusalem, and of the government, and made great spoil; (Hyrchanus being^p sent prisoner to the king of the Parthians, by whom he was kindly used.) At which time, Herod, (called afterwards *the great*,) of the country of Idumea, but of the Jewish religion, having been declared king of the Jews by the favour of the Romans, and out of aversion to Antigonus, (whom they looked upon as a man of a busy, turbulent spirit, and a professed enemy to Rome,) made war against him; and in the third year after he was declared king, being assisted by Sossius, a Roman general, laid siege to Jerusalem, with the Roman soldiers, and

^m Joseph. Antiq. book xiv. chap. 12. ⁿ Idem ibid. ^o Joseph. Antiq. book xiv. chap. 24, 25. ^p Ibid. b. xv. c. 2.

some Jews who served under him; and after five months took the city by assault. The soldiers put all to the sword without mercy, and without sparing either age or sex, and would have utterly ruined the city, had not Herod redeemed it with a sum of money. This happened upon the day of a solemn fast, it being the very anniversary of their destruction by Pompey, above mentioned. Antigonus himself was sent prisoner to Anthony, (one of the Roman generals,) being then at Antioch; but afterwards, by Herod's procurement and bribe, he was beheaded, and Herod established in his kingdom of Judea⁹, between thirty-seven and thirty-eight years before the birth of Christ. Herod, to make all sure, as he had procured the death of Antigonus, so out of jealousy afterwards, having gotten Hyrcanus into his power, he basely put him to death^r, being the only remaining prince of the Maccabees, or Asmonean family.

Under Herod, the Jews in some measure enjoyed the exercise of their ancient religion, and their government, (by the high-priest and great council or sanhedrim,) so far at least as he esteemed it consistent with his own authority. But he made the high-priesthood, instead of being hereditary, to be an arbitrary office, as others after him did, who were in power, till the destruction of Jerusalem^s.

He was not a Jew, much less of the priestly family, but the son of Antipas, (who was also called Antipater,) of Idumea. Now these Idumeans, though not Jews by birth, were yet proselytes to their religion, from the time that Johannes Hyrcanus (son of Simon, one of the princes of the Maccabees, or Asmonean family) obliged them to embrace the Jewish religion, on the peril of quitting the country they possessed, about one hundred and twenty-nine years before Christ: so that king Herod was of the Jewish religion, though not of the

⁹ Joseph. Antiq. b. xiv. ch. 26, 27, 28. and b. xv. chap. 1. and of Wars, b. i. ch. 13. ^r Joseph. Antiq. b. xv. ch. 2, 9. ^s Ibid. b. xv. chap. 3. at the beginning; where he says, the first who broke in upon that rule was Antiochus Epiphanes, who removed Jason, or Joshua, to make way for his brother Onias; Aristobulus was the second, who supplanted Hyrcanus; and the third was Herod, who put in Aristobulus while Ananel was living.

family or country of the Jews'. He is represented by Josephus as a person of courage and resolution, munificently generous to ingratiate himself with the great ones at Rome, very liberal, and even extravagant in his expences that way, very magnificent in buildings, and disposed in appearance to do good to every one: but still all his actions and behaviour tended to the procurement and maintenance of his own honour and greatness, which he was always greedy of; and for that end became very burdensome to his subjects, for the supplying of his expences, and inexorably cruel and oppressive, wherever he was opposed, not sparing his nearest friends, relations, or his own children; being a slave to his passions, and sticking at no means, how unjustifiable soever, for the attainment of his greatness, and the subduing of his enemies: for which he was hated by the generality of his subjects".

One great work he accomplished: but even that was, because he thought it would redound so much to the honour of his name and memory. In his time, the temple, which had been built at Jerusalem after the return from the Babylonian captivity, (which was therefore called *the second temple*.) was much decayed: whereupon Herod, in the eighteenth year of his reign, as Josephus reckons it, with an incredible charge, set about the repair, or rather rebuilding the same; which he finished in ^s nine years and an half, that is, so as to make it fit for use. As for the passage^y, *forty and six years was*, or rather *hath*^z, *this temple been in building*, that is said, because though Herod for the main finished it in nine years and an half, yet till Christ's time, and after, workmen were still employed about some part of it^a. Notwithstanding, Herod rendered himself very offensive to those of the Jews, who were zealous for their law, by setting up a golden eagle over the larger gate of the temple, the better to ingratiate himself with the Romans, (who had the eagle for their ensign,) since

^t Joseph. Antiq. b. xiii. ch. 17. Compare Cunæus, lib. i. c. 16. and Dean Prideaux's Connection, part ii. ann. 165. and 72. ^u Joseph. Antiq. book xvi. ch. 9. and chap. 11. at the end, and chap. 17. and b. xvii. chap. 8, 10. ^x Ibid. b. xv. ch. 14, near the end. ^y John ii. 20. ^z *αὐτοδομήθη*. ^a Compare Lightfoot, Hor. in Joh. ii. 20. with Joseph. Antiq. Gr. lib. xx. cap. viii. 5.

the Jews' laws absolutely forbad the use and ornament of images in such cases^b.

This second temple repaired, or rather rebuilt, by king Herod, is the same with that which is spoken of in the New Testament, in which Christ shewed himself: for though Herod rebuilt it from the very foundation, yet since he used much of the old materials, and built it in some part after the other, the Jewish rabbies^c call it by the same name, as they did before Herod's time, *viz. the second temple*. So the prophecy of Haggai was fulfilled^d, *the glory of the latter house shall be greater than the former*; for in the former temple, indeed, there was a glory and light that appeared, which shadowed out Christ; but in this was seen Christ himself. For now the fulness of time was come, and our Lord Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, and presented in the temple, according to the law; which came to pass about four thousand and four years from the beginning of the world, five hundred and thirty-six years after the return from the Babylonian captivity, and one hundred and sixty-six years from the beginning of the Maccabees' government.

This was that Herod who slew the infants^e, hoping to kill Christ amongst them. There is the less reason to wonder at his being guilty of so barbarous an action, when Josephus^f informs us, that he ordered all the principal of the Jewish people to be summoned to appear at Jericho, (where himself lay ill,) on pain of death; where they were shut up in the Hippodrom, or tilt-yard for horses, in order to be all slain as soon as he was dead, that there might be a general lamentation at his death, which he foresaw would not otherwise have been: (though in this he was^g disappointed, they being released after his decease.)

In his last sickness, being in the seventieth year of his age, he was choleric and furious, which was occasioned by the haughtiness of his stomach, on a fancy that the Jews con-

^b Joseph. Antiq. book xvii. chap. 8.

^c As for the objection and pretence

of the Jews, see Bp. Kidder's Demonstration, p. iii. chap. 8.

^d Hagg. ii. 9.

^e Matt. ii.

^f Antiq. book xvii. chap. 8.

^g Joseph. Antiq. book xvii.

chap. 10.

temned him, and took pleasure in his misery. His disease, the historian observes, looked like a judicial punishment of his wickedness, being almost burnt up inwardly with a fever, tormented with an insatiable canine appetite, and with ulcers in his guts, his privy parts putrefying, and worms crawling over them, insomuch that he attempted to stab himselfⁿ. He died (according to ⁱ Josephus) thirty-four years after the expulsion of Antigonus, and in the thirty-seventh year from his being declared king of the Jews by the Romans, and about a year and a quarter (as some compute) after the true time of Christ's birth. His dominions were divided by the Romans among three of his sons, whom he mentioned in his will. The greatest part, or kingdom, consisting of Idumea, Judea, and Samaria, was given to Archelaus; Galilee, and the country beyond Jordan, called Peræa, to young Herod, named Antipas; and to Philip, Trachonitis, a country about mount Gilead, beyond Jordan northwards^k.

These several dominions were called *tetrarchies*, which word signifies governments consisting of a fourth part or division, three of which have been now spoken to; the fourth was Abilene, so called from Abila, its chief town^l, of which one Lysanias was the tetrarch or governor for the time of which St. Luke wrote: he indeed was not of Herod's family; but this last part or tetrarchy was reckoned as one of the four, because it had been formerly possessed by one Zenodorus, who (by conniving at, and sharing with the base people and robbers of the country) had so offended Augustus, that he conferred it on Herod the Great^m.

As for the Sanhedrim, or grand council of the Jews, in which the high-priest was chief, that still continued in great authority by the permission of the Romans, but they had not the power of life and death.

^h Ibid. b. xvii. chap. 8, 9. ⁱ Ibid. book xvii. chap. 10. ^k Ibid. b. xvii. ch. 10. ^l Mentioned Luke iii. 1. Jos. Ant. book xx. chap. 5. ^m Joseph. Ant. book xv. chap. 15.

CHAP. XXII.

From the Death of Herod, to the Destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple.

ARCHELAUS, before mentioned, in the tenth year of his government, (which was the sixth year of Christ, according to the vulgar account,) was deposed and banished for his cruelty and tyranny, upon complaint of the Jews against him to Augustus^a, and his dominions of Judea and Samaria were, by the Romans, added to^b the province of Syria, and one Cyrenius (or Quirinus^c) was made president or chief governor of that province; (a province being a country which the Romans had conquered, and governed by deputies or presidents.) These presidents, or governors, had the chief authority, and the power of the sword: but the Romans had other inferior officers about this time in their provinces, *viz.* procurators^d, whose proper business was to take an account of tribute paid by the subjects, and dispose of it to the emperor's advantage. But because the presidents of Syria, into whose province Judea was cast, were obliged to keep at home in Syria, and because the Jews were suspected of a rebellious disposition against the Roman state, therefore the procurators of Judea had a full commission, being furnished with the power^e of life and death, (as was Coponius, the first procurator in Judea,) and so were as presidents or governors. Of which number, in the twenty-sixth year of Christ, was Pontius Pilate, under whom Christ suffered. He was one thoroughly prepared to pass an unjust sentence, having the character of a person guilty of "corruption, justice exposed to sale, rapines, violence, ruin, torments, innocent blood, and the most barbarous of cruelties^f."

^a Joseph. Ant. b. xvii. ch. 15.

^b Idem. *ibid.*

^c Mentioned Luke ii. 2.

^d Joseph. Antiq. book xviii. chap. 1. Compare Bishop Pearson on the Creed, article 4. of Pontius Pilate.

^e *Μιχρη του κτεινειν λαων παρα του Καισαρος εζουσιαν.* Josephus of the Wars, Gr. lib. ii. cap. 8. (L'Estrange, chap. vii. with a full commission.)

^f Philo Legat. chap. xvi. the middle of Agrippa's Letter to Caius.

The providence of God is here to be observed, in that the full power of judicature in Judea was left in the hands of a Roman procurator or governor, (which the Jews own^e was forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem;) for by this means it came to pass, that Christ suffered the death which it was foretold he should suffer, *viz.* by *piercing his hands and his feet*^h, or being *crucified*; and as himself had foretoldⁱ; which was not after the custom of the Jews^k, but the Romans, who were wont to crucify for sedition especially, which Pilate condemned Christ for, upon the importunate accusation of the Jews, though he did not believe it^l. Those whom the Jews of that age put to death seem to be slain rather in a tumultuous manner, and by the connivance of the Romans, for some political reasons, than by any proper judicial power or proceedings; and their condemning of Christ in the Sanhedrim or council^m, was no judicial sentence, but a determining to require or demand his condemnation, as being (so they would have it) *guilty of death*ⁿ. They had indeed the power to hear or examine causes, in order to accuse any one, as they did Christ, but not to condemn with effect, or pass sentence.

Note, All the time our Lord Jesus Christ manifested himself to the world, and also when he suffered, Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea and Samaria, and Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, in Galilee.

It was this Herod who beheaded John the Baptist, and to whom, being then at Jerusalem, Pilate sent Christ, having understood that he was of Galilee, which was Herod's jurisdiction^o.

Three years after Christ's death, and in the tenth year of Pilate's government, there happened^p to meet together a rabble of Samaritans in arms, to whom a certain impostor

^e Grot. in Joh. xviii. 31. Lightf. Hor. in Matth. xxvi. 3. Casaubon. Exercit. xvi. an. 34. num. 76. p. 529. (edit. Geneva, 1655.) ^h Psal. xxii. 17. ⁱ John

xviii. 32. Matth. xx. 19. ^k Casaubon. Exercit. xvi. an. 34. num. 92. and

§. 77. p. 537, &c. ubi multa de hac re lectu dignissima. ^l Luke xxiii. 14. John xix. 12. ^m Mark xiv. 64. ⁿ Matth. xxvi. 66. ^o Luke xxiii.

^p Joseph. Antiq. book xviii. chap. 5.

pretended to shew the holy vessels, which, he said, Moses had caused to be hid in mount Gerizim. Against these Pilate sent a body of horse and foot, and killed great numbers of them, and also beheaded some prisoners, which he took among them, of quality or interest. Upon complaint against him for his cruelties, Vitellius, then president of Syria, (of which province Judea was a part,) deprived Pilate of his government, and sent Marcellus in his room[†]. Soon after, Pilate was banished by the emperor Caligula; upon which, in discontent, he killed himself[‡].

Two years after Pilate's deprivation, Herod Antipas also (the same who married Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, and to humour her daughter, when dancing before him, had consented to order *John Baptist to be beheaded*, and also the same Herod who had mocked Christ) was, together with the impious Herodias, punished for their crimes on this occasion. The aforementioned Herodias, envying the honour and preferment lately conferred on her brother Agrippa, (the son of Aristobulus, and grandson to Herod the Great,) by the emperor Caligula, prevailed on her husband Herod Antipas (we are speaking of) to go to Rome, and obtain the like dignity for himself; which Agrippa understanding, to countermine them, he posted away letters to the emperor, and accused this Herod Antipas of a conspiracy: upon which the emperor, without further enquiry, deprived him of his dominions, which he had held for thirty-six years, and of all his treasure, and gave the same to Agrippa as a reward for the discovery[§]. His incestuous wife Herodias also, not accepting the emperor's offers of favour to her, chose rather to be banished with her husband[¶]. And not long after this, about eight years from Christ's passion, Claudius, then Roman emperor, bestowed Judea and Samaria (which had been part of the kingdom or tetrarchy of Archelaus) upon the aforesaid Herod Agrippa, with the title of king^{||}; and so he is called in Scripture, *Herod the king*^x. He had the government of Galilee con-

[†] Joseph. Antiq. book xviii. chap. 5. [‡] Euseb. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 7. [§] Joseph. Antiq. book xviii. chap. 9. [¶] Ibid. ^{||} Ibid. book xix. chap. 4. ^x Acts xii.

ferred upon him three years before, on the banishment of his uncle Herod Antipas, the tetrarch, (as hath been said,) so that now Agrippa was king of the whole country. But three years after that he died miserably¹, being smitten by an angel, and eaten of worms². Josephus says, that upon his not rebuking the people flattering him as God, he was seized with sudden violent gripings in his bowels³, which might cause ulcers breeding worms. This was that Herod who beheaded James, and imprisoned Peter.

Afterwards, the Romans again sent procurators, or governors, into Judea; such as Caspius Fadus^b, and, after some time, Felix, and then Festus, who resided at Cæsarea, which was then accounted by the Romans the metropolis or head city of Palestine, and made by them the seat of their president, or governor. Hence Paul appeared there before the governors Felix and Festus^c. The Romans also gave the^d dominions formerly belonging to Philip, with Trachonitis and Abilene, which Lysanias had, (being a mountainous country, lying north-eastwards of Galilee and Jordan,) and soon after a part of Galilee with the cities of Tiberias and Tarichee, to Agrippa the younger, the son of Herod Agrippa last mentioned, called in Scripture *King Agrippa*^e. These three, Felix, and Festus, and King Agrippa, were those before whom Paul pleaded^f.

This Agrippa was the last who had the title of *King of the Jews*; for in his time the Jews rebelled, being provoked by the outrageous oppressions of Florus, the then Roman governor of Judea, “^g who made it his glory to declare himself a professed enemy to the whole nation, and behaved himself in his province more like an executioner than a governor; for he treated the whole body of the people like common criminals, without setting any bounds either to his rapine or his tyranny; and then for his avarice, he drained the province into so starving a degree of poverty, that many of the in-

^y Joseph. Antiq. book xix. chap. 7.

^z Acts xii.

^a Joseph. Antiq. b. xix.

c. 7.

^b Idem ibid.

^c Acts xxiii. xxiv.

^d Joseph. b. xx. ch. 5. at the

middle and the end of the chapter.

^e Acts xxv.

^f Acts xxiv, xxv, xxvi.

^g Joseph. Wars, b. ii. ch. 13, 15.

habitants left it, and went to live elsewhere ; so that at length, to avoid their complaints against him at Rome, he did all he could to work them up to a revolt in his own defence." This tyranny having made the people ripe for rebellion, there was soon afterwards a particular occasion given at Cæsarea, before mentioned, where a certain Greek, having a house close by a synagogue, blocked up the way, so that there was not convenient room for the Jews to get into their synagogue ; neither would Florus assert ^h their right, but, on the contrary, allowed his soldiers to plunder and slay them. This, with other indignities, first set on some hot-brained young fellows, and factious persons, of whom a strong party surprised a Roman garrison at Massada, near the Dead Sea ^l, and put all the Roman soldiers to the sword ^k ; and one Eleazar, the high priest's son, prevailed on some of the priests not to receive the sacrifices usually offered up to God for the welfare of the Roman empire ^l. And thus in a little time the great body of the Jews were brought to an open rebellion, and even flattered themselves that their brethren beyond Euphrates would join with them ^m. Upon which Nero, then emperor of Rome, sent an army against them, under the command ⁿ of Vespasian and Titus his son, which occasioned the most dreadful slaughters and desolations ; and no wonder, when they were so given up by God, and infatuated, as to rush headlong into a war, in which there were such disadvantages, as of "raw soldiers against veterans, foot against horse, confusion against order, people slightly armed against troops well appointed, rage and passion against conduct ^o."

The wars now begun did, in four years after, prove the utter ruin and destruction of the Jewish nation. Several prodigies ^p foreboded their approaching calamities, (as Christ had foretold.) A comet hung over Jerusalem for one whole year together, in the figure of a sword. A cow was delivered of a

^h Joseph. Wars, b. ii. ch. 14. ⁱ Baudrand. ^k Joseph. Wars, b. ii. ch. 17.
^l Ibid. and Pref. to the Wars. Such was the sacrifice of a bull and two lambs, which Agrippa mentioned in his letter to Caius, as ordered by Augustus to be daily offered in the temple. Philonis Legat. c. xvi. near the end. ^m Idem ibid. ⁿ Joseph. Wars, b. iii. c. 1, &c. ^o Joseph. Wars, b. iii. c. 1, &c. ^p Ibid. book vii. chap. 12.

lamb in the midst of the temple, as they were leading her to the altar for a sacrifice. There were seen chariots and armed men up and down the air. A plain country fellow had cried out about four years before the war, “Woe, woe, to Jerusalem, the temple, and the people;” and although lashed for it severely, yet he still persisted till the siege was formed, concluding at last upon the wall with “Woe, woe, to myself;” at which instant he was taken off with a stone from an engine. An innumerable company of the Jews, in the course of the war, were either slain, or killed themselves, or perished through famine, and other miseries. Above twenty thousand of them were killed in one day at Cæsarea^q, which soon made the whole body of the Jews desperate, and do^r all the mischief they could, wherever they were, by burning and slaughters; and they were dealt with accordingly, as the common enemies of mankind; so that thirteen thousand were butchered in one night at Scythopolis^s (in Syria), fifty thousand at Alexandria^t (in Egypt), without distinction of age or sex; eight thousand four hundred were put to the sword at Joppa, (a sea-port town of their own,) men, women, and children^u. At Damascus (in Syria) the people fell upon the Jews, and cut the throats of ten thousand of them in one hour^x.

The forces of Vespasian altogether made up a body of sixty thousand horse and foot^y, and marching into Galilee, (a country affording the most resolute and warlike persons^z,) the soldiers “depopulated the same, night and day, with fire and sword, putting all to death, where they found resistance, and making slaves of the rest, till the country was all covered with fire and blood, and nothing left them to trust to but some fortified towns, which by degrees were all subdued, with the most dismal slaughters that ever were².”

At length, after some revolutions in the Roman empire, and Vespasian being declared emperor, when nothing else was wanting to put a final end to this terrible war, Jerusalem was

^q Joseph. Wars, book ii. chap. 19. ^r Ibid. ^s Ibid. ^t Ibid. b. ii. ch. 21.

^u Ibid. b. ii. ch. 22. ^x Ibid. b. ii. ch. 25. ^y Jos. Wars, b. iii. ch. 3. ^z Joseph. Bell. l. iii. c. 3. Gr. *Μαχημοί εκ νηπιων.* ² Joseph. Wars, b. iii. ch. 3, &c. and b. iv. to the end of chap. 4.

besieged by his son Titus^b, which our Lord foretold near forty years beforehand^c, calling it *the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place*, that is, the idolatrous army of the Romans, with their military ensigns and images of their gods, (which the Jews had in abomination,) about Jerusalem and the temple.

That we may the better apprehend the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, it may not be improper to set down, in short, the account which Josephus, a Jew, and who then lived, gives of the strength and glorious buildings thereof^d.

“The city of Jerusalem was surrounded with three walls, saving only upon the quarter towards the inaccessible valleys, where there was but one. It was erected upon two hills, the one directly fronting the other^e, and a deep valley betwixt them. The oldest of the three walls was extremely strong, by reason of the depth of the valley before, and the overhanging of the rock from above, whereupon it was erected. Besides the natural advantage of the situation, it had all the helps that David and Solomon, and several other princes, could contribute to the further strengthening it by art, industry, and expence. The walls were fortified with towers: upon the third wall there were ninety towers; the middle wall had fourteen; and the old one sixty; and thirty-three furlongs was the compass of the whole city. Just within the city there stood a royal palace, so rich and curious, that it is not for the tongue of man to express it, being magnificently built, with stately rooms, and furnished with vessels of gold and silver, and whatever else was precious.

“The temple was built upon the very top of a mount, [Moriah, within the city,] encompassed with three walls, with a prodigious expence of time and treasure; for it was not only a work of many ages, but the whole mass of religious oblations from all parts of the world, to the honour and service of God and his worship, was spent upon this undertaking. The pillars were of white marble, and twenty-five cubits in height: some of the gates were plated all over with gold and silver, together with the posts and lintels; but there was one without

^b Book vi. ch. 5, to the end of ch. 11.

^c Matt. xxiv. 15. Luke xiv. 43.

^d Jos. Wars, b. vi. ch. 6.

^e See the preface, num. iii.

the temple of Corinthian brass^e, which was much the more valuable. The beauty and curiosity of the temple on the outside was agreeable and charming beyond imagination, being faced every where with substantial gold plates, that sparkled like fire at the sun rising, dazzling the eyes of the beholders. The roof of the temple was armed with pointed spikes of gold. There were some stones in this building of forty-five cubits long, five in height, and six cubits broad." He says this of some particular stones; but when he gives an account of Herod's providing materials in general, for the repairing or rebuilding the temple, he thus writes: " ^f The whole fabric was made of durable white stone, about five and twenty cubits long, eight in height, and twelve over." Now supposing the cubit about a foot and a half, these stones, last mentioned, must be large planks, at least twelve yards long, four in height, and six yards broad: and as to the possibility thereof, he mentions " the plenty of money, the good-will of the people, their perseverance, and the length of time ^g;" and for a confirmation hereof, it may be here mentioned, that a late judicious traveller, of good credit, measured three stones, raised twenty feet high, in the building of Balbeck, (near mount Libanus, in Cœlesyria,) one whereof being in length one and twenty yards, the other two each twenty yards, and in deepness and breadth four yards each ^h. From all which accounts we perceive that Christ's disciples had cause, when they *came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple*, to say, *See what manner of stones and buildings are here*, and to admire *how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts* ⁱ. Nay, even the very place where this glorious temple stood, doth strike the beholder with admiration; of which the same traveller writes thus: " ^k In the middle of the area, on the top of mount Moriah, stands at present a mosque, or Turkish church: it is neither eminent for its largeness nor its structure; and yet it

^e Which was that mixture of precious metal, found when Corinth was burnt by the Romans, which consisted of several images of gold, silver, and brass, melted together. ^f Antiq. b. xv. ch. 14. ^g Bell. [Gr. l. v. c. 5, &c.] ^h Mr.

Maudrell's Journey to Jerusalem, May 5. p. 138. ⁱ Matt. xxiv. 1. Mark xiii. 1. Luke xxi. 5. ^k Maudrell's Journey, April 8, p. 107. second edition.

makes a very stately figure, by the sole advantage of its situation."

Let us next proceed to the history of the fulfilling our Saviour's prophecy in the destruction of Jerusalem, and the temple of the Jews.

In the first place, it is remarkable, that their own obstinacy, violent dissensions, and infatuation, was a great cause of their ruin. This had been expressly foretold: "*The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart.* Accordingly, when the fate of their city and temple drew near, since they had not *known in that their day the things that belonged to their peace, now they were hidden from their eyes*; for there were (as their historian relates) "irreconcilable divisions, and the most destructive factions among themselves," chiefly occasioned by some turbulent persons, especially the zealots, whereby they did one another as much mischief by cruelty and injustice, as the Romans; till, in conclusion, some of the principal of the faction entered Jerusalem with a great body of their party, the most domineering of which were the zealots, whose insolence was the ruin of their city and countryⁿ.

These zealots pretended to be the successors of Phineas, who, in his zeal for the glory of God, slew Zimri and Cosbi in the act of their sin^o; in imitation whereof these men took upon them to execute justice on extraordinary occasions, without the formality of law, till at length they became most extravagant and licentious, and the authors of confusion^p.

Of other parties opposing these zealots, there were three factions at once in the city, and each against the other; one in the upper part of the city, another in the lower part, and a third in the temple; till amongst them all was brought to confusion, the succession of the high-priesthood was abrogated, and unworthy vile persons promoted^q: the very temple was made a field of battle, and, together with the altar, "polluted with heaps of carcases, and the gore of dead bodies," even before the Romans took the city^r; yet still they continued ob-

^m Deut. xxviii. 28.

3, 7, 9. ^o Numb. xxv.

^q Joseph. Wars, b. iv. c. 5.

ⁿ Josephus's Wars, b. iv. ch. 5, &c. and b. v. chap.

^p Joseph. Wars, b. vii. ch. 28, near the beginning.

^r Ibid. b. vi. chap. 1.

stinate in refusing submission to the Romans, notwithstanding Josephus, by the commission and appointment of the Roman general Titus, assured them, "that the Romans only demanded a yearly tribute, which had been formerly paid; and that if this were made good, the temple and city had nothing to fear, but they should enjoy their families, their liberties, and their estates, with the free exercise of their religion, and under the regulation of their own laws".

Upon the first sight of the Roman camp, the three seditious parties are said to "agree the matter, and to piece again," making some desperate sallies upon their besiegers: but no sooner had they a little breathing while from the hostilities of the Romans, but "they fell presently all to pieces among themselves", till the common enemy made them friends again, so far as to continue obstinate in resisting the Romans, which they did to the very last, as a people given up by God, and hardened to pull on themselves their own destruction.

The next thing remarkable is, that the city was besieged at the time of the great feast of the Passover, (the same time of the year in which they had murdered the Messiah,) when vast multitudes from all places flocked together to Jerusalem^u, which (by a computation made before this in Nero's time, by reckoning up the number of the lambs which, according to the custom, were first offered in the temple before they were eaten in their families, and allowing ten persons to a lamb,) might amount to twenty-seven hundred thousand persons^x: so that, as the historian proceeds, "this mighty concourse of people from abroad, before the siege, was afterwards, by the righteous judgment of God, crowded up in the city, as in a prison;" for Titus had run up a wall round it^y: upon which was fulfilled our Lord's prophecy, *"The days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side."* This occasioned a lamentable famine, so that "wives

^s Joseph. Wars, b. vi. c. 11. and b. vii. c. 13.

^t Ibid. b. vi. c. 3, 4, 7, 8.

^u Ibid. b. vi. c. 4, 5, 16.

^x Josephus's Wars, b. vii. c. 17. Dr. Hudson's translation is, *vicies septies centena millia*, Gr. lib. vi. c. 9.

^y Ibid: b. vi. c. 13.

^z Luke xix. 43.

forced the meat out of the very mouths of their husbands; children did the like by their parents, and even mothers by their infants^a:" in short, the famine "swept away whole families, and the houses and alleys were strewed with dead carcasses^b." This forced some to steal out by night for provision; many of which the Roman soldiers seized on, and, after exposing them to all manner of tortures, they were crucified^c, as they had treated our Saviour. One, who had escaped out of the city, was surprised in the act of searching for gold, which had been swallowed, and passed through him. The soldiers discovering this, ripped up two thousand of their bellies in one night for their gold^d. And so much did the famine increase, that the Jews eat old girdles and shoes, and the shreds of old hay; and a certain mother killed and boiled her own sucking child, half of which she did eat, and covered up the other half^e; whereby was accomplished that dreadful judgment which Moses had so many ages before threatened upon their disobedience, *'And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons, and of thy daughters, in the siege, and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee:* and also that of our Lord, *¶ Behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.*

At length the perpetual or daily sacrifice, which was wont to be offered morning and evening in the temple, ceased for want of a congregation, or of priests to officiate^h, as the prophet Daniel foretoldⁱ; the famous city of Jerusalem, and the glorious temple therein, were burnt, and razed to the ground, and utterly destroyed^k. Eleven hundred thousand Jews were slain, and ninety-seven thousand taken prisoners, and made slaves^l, there being a general meeting of them at Jerusalem from all quarters, to celebrate the Passover, as hath been said: and considering the direful circumstances described

^a Joseph. Wars, b. vi. c. 11. near the end. ^b Ibid. b. vi. c. 14. ^c Ibid. b. vi. c. 12. ^d Ibid. b. vi. c. 15. ^e Ibid. b. vii. c. 7, 8. ^f Deut. xxviii. 53. ^g Luke xxiii. 29. ^h Josephus, b. vii. c. 4. [Gr. lib. vi. c. 2. *ανδρων απορια.*] ⁱ Dan. ix. 27. ^k Joseph. b. vii. c. 9, 10, 11. ^l Ibid. b. vii. ch. 17.

by the historian^m, in his account of this siege, and of the Roman soldiers storming the city and the temple, such as “the rage and outcries of soldiers and citizens, the crackling of the flames, the killing all that were met with, young and old, men, women, children, priests, and laics, mountains of dead bodies piled up about the altar, streams of blood flowing down the steps, and the groanings of dying persons weltering in their own gore,” it is possible there never was so dismal a scene in any place whatsoever, as was then in the city and temple: all which, and many other dreadful miseries, came upon them for their sins, and particularly for their rejecting of the Son of God, the Messiah and Saviour; a sad evidence this of Divine justice, by making good their own dreadful imprecation on themselves, who, when they crucified the Lord of glory, (instead of what was usual, his blood be *on his own head*ⁿ,) cried out, [the guilt of] *his blood be on us, and our children*^o. And so truly was that blood required at their hands, that what our Saviour threatened, was in the largest sense effected; ^p *such tribulation as was not from the beginning of the world, nor ever shall be.*

This only poor consolation some of them fancied to themselves, (as the Roman historian, with Josephus, observes ^q,) that since their temple was destroyed, “it being that which they had been so concerned to preserve, the loss of their lives now was not so much a ruin as a victory, safety, and happiness, to perish with it.” *Note*, that as this was the heavy judgment Christ forewarned them of^r, so it is often mentioned in the Gospels, by the expressions of *the coming of Christ, the coming of the Son of man, and the coming of the Lord*^s.

This destruction was the more remarkable, because Titus, the Roman general, would at first have spared the city and temple^t, the last mentioned especially, being unwilling (as he said) “to lay so glorious a building in ashes; for that would be a loss to the Roman empire, as it would be an ornament if

^m See especially b. vii. ch. 10, 11. ⁿ Josh. ii. 19. ^o Matt. xxvii. 25.

^p Matt. xxiv. 21.

^q Dion. Cass. apud Xiphilinum in Vespasianum, p. 217.

Joseph. Wars, b. vii. c. 10.

^r Matt. xxiv.

^s Matt. xxiv. 27. John xxi. 22, &c.

^t Joseph. Wars, b. vi. c. 10. and b. vii. c. 9, 10, 16.

preserved^u:" but a soldier, without command, "being excited by some divine impulse," set fire to the temple, and the flashes were so violent, as if they would have "burnt up the mountain to the very roots upon which it was built." This, Josephus observes, was "determined by God," the temple being burnt the same month and day of the year, on which it was formerly burnt by the Babylonians^v. Afterwards Titus, considering its great strength, and viewing its ruins, declared, that "God himself assisted him" in fighting against and vanquishing the Jews^w. He might have added, that the Jews themselves assisted him therein, who were so infatuated by the just judgment of God, that their destruction was as much the effect of factions and divisions among themselves, as the valour of their enemies; as hath been observed already.

Further, in token of an entire conquest of the Jews, the emperor Vespasian caused medals to be struck, with the device of *a woman sitting on the ground* (the Jews posture of mourning^b) *near to a palm tree*, (by which the Romans represented Phœnicia and Judæa,) with this inscription, JUD. CAPT. *Judæa capta*; and another, of *a woman standing by, or leaning to a palm tree, with her hands bound*, and the inscription, *Judæa devicta*, that is, in memory of the Jews being subdued^c. The emperor also laid the tax of the didrachma, or two drachms, (supposed to be the same with the half shekel^d, about fifteen pence of our money,) "upon every Jew, wheresoever living, to be paid yearly to the capitol," or temple of the heathen god Jupiter, "which was wont to be paid to the temple of God in Jerusalem^e."

^u Joseph. Wars, b. vii. c. 9. ^x Ibid. b. vii. c. 10. [Græc. l. vi. c. 4. δαίμονος ὁρμη σὺνι χρωμένος.] ^y Ibid. b. vii. c. 11. ^z Joseph. b. vii. c. 9. near the end.

^a Ibid. b. vii. c. 16. ^b Isa. iii. 26. ^c Bizei Numismata Vespasiani, p. 25. et Antonii Augustini Antiquitates Rom. dialog. iii. num. 14. et Numismata Vespasiani et Titi, ab Adolph. Oecone. Edit. Mediolani, 1683, p. 110. addit prædictus Augustinus ibid. "Adhæc in triumphali arcu Romæ in Titi Vespasiani honorem exædificato, triumphus cernitur de Judæa et Hierosolyma, spectanturque candelabra templi Solomonis adeo celebrati." To this may be added, Josephus's account of Vespasian's and Titus's triumph, speaking of the spoils which were then carried; "The most considerable pieces were the golden table and the golden candlesticks, which were taken out of the temple of Jerusalem." Wars, b. vii. c. 24. ^d Exod. xxx. 11, &c. ^e Joseph. Wars, b. vii. c. 26. The like

This heavy judgment fell on the Jews somewhat above fifteen hundred years after their entrance into Canaan, six hundred and two years after their return from the Babylonian captivity, seventy years after our Lord's birth, and thirty-seven years after his crucifixion. The Gospel having been first planted up and down the world, especially in all parts subject to the Roman empire, (as the word, which we translate *the world*, signifies in the original^f;) by the travels and preachings of the apostles, and their assistants, beginning at Jerusalem, as Christ foretold^g, that the Gospel should be so preached before *the end* of the Jewish state *come*. St. Mark^h added the word *first*, as more significant, the *Gospel must first be published among all nations*. So St. Paul affirms, that *their sound went out into all the earth*ⁱ; applying hereto what the Psalmist says of the revolution of the heavenly bodies^k. And if only one apostle, St. Paul, *from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum, fully preached the Gospel of Christ*^l, that is, in several parts of Asia and Europe, what may we suppose of all the other apostles, and all their numerous assistants!

We may further make two observations concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, and the temple of the Jews: the *first*, that their temple signified nothing any longer, since Christ had fulfilled all that was to be done in it, and therefore there was an end to be put to it; and since the Christian church had been founded in the city of the earthly Jerusalem, and all had been done therein too that had been foretold, a period was to be put to that also^m.

In the next place it is fit to observe, how the singular providence of God shewed itself for the safety of the Christians, who were among the unbelieving Jews; for beingⁿ warned by the caution our Lord gave them^o, that when they should see Jerusalem encompassed with armies, *the abomination of desolation stand in the holy place*, or begirting the holy city of

account is given by Dion. Cassius apud Xiphilinum in Vespasianum, p. 217. Compare Grot. in Matt. xvii. 24. ^f Luke ii. 1. ^g Matt. xxiv. 14. ^h Chap. xiii. 10. ⁱ Rom. x. 18. ^k Psalm xix. 4. See also Rom. i. 8. Coloss. i. 6, 23. ^l Rom. xv. 19. ^m See Irenæus, l. iv. c. 7. ⁿ Euseb. Hist. l. iii. c. 5.

^o Matt. xxiv. 15, 16.

Jerusalem, that they should then *flee to the mountains*: I say, the Christians seeing this token when Jerusalem was first besieged under Cestius Gallus, (then president of Syria, who^p was incited thereto by Florus,) about four years before its ruin, and having opportunity by the unexpected and sudden^q breaking up of that siege, they all^r left Jerusalem, and betook themselves to Pella, a city beyond Jordan, in the mountainous country of Cœlesyria, inhabited by Gentiles, (as appears by the Jews demolishing it under Alexander, one of the Maccabees, because^s they “refused to conform to their laws and customs,” or the rites of their religion,) which place was shewn them by divine revelation, and there they were safe from that destruction: but afterwards they appear to have returned to the ruined Jerusalem, and the neighbouring parts; because we have an account of fifteen successions of bishops of Jerusalem^t, from the apostles unto Adrian’s time, who were of the circumcision, or Jews converted; and one of the ancients acquaints us^u, that the Christians, “when returned, wrought great miracles;” and when Adrian came to Jerusalem, about sixty years after its destruction, he is said to “find the city wholly levelled to the ground^x, except a few houses, and a little church,” which most likely had been built by the Christians at their return thither.

After all the dreadful slaughters above mentioned, some remains of the Jews^y held for a little time two or three strong castles; but they were soon suppressed, and many thousands of them more were put to death, or sold, or dispersed. At one of those strong holds, *viz.* Massada, many of them, when besieged, in despair first killed their wives and children, and then each other, by consent, to the number of nine hundred and sixty.

It is further observable, that Josephus, an eye-witness, says, that by the command of Titus, “the city of Jerusalem and the temple were laid level with the ground, and so ut-

^p Joseph. Wars, b. ii. c. 16. ^q Ibid. b. ii. c. 24. ^r Eusebius says, the church in Jerusalem, *ωσαν παντελως*, as it were, totally relinquished the city and all the country, Euseb. Hist. l. iii. c. 5. ^s Joseph. Antiq. b. xiii. c. 23. ^t Euseb. Hist. l. iv. c. 5. ^u Epiphanius de Mens. et Pond. num. 15. ^x Idem *ibid.* num. 14. ^y Jos. Wars, b. vii. c. 25, 26.

terly demolished, that the place looked as if it had been never inhabited^z;" and according to the fashion of the Romans, (as in their first marking out a new city, so in demolishing towns^a;) a plough^b was brought over the place where the city and temple had stood; only they left three famous turrets as a monument^c of the strength of the place, and of the valour of the Romans, and also a piece of a wall to the westward of the town, where they designed a garrison; but even those were^d demolished about sixty-two years after by the emperor Adrian; and, in Julian's time the very foundations of the temple were torn up by an earthquake, (of which afterwards,) so fully and literally was our Saviour's prediction made good, *"Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down^e."*

Here we may take notice, that as God's sending his Son Jesus Christ into the world, according to his promise made so long before, is a sufficient assurance to us, that all the rest of his promises to his church shall be made good in their season; so this dreadful judgment on the Jews, which was

^z Joseph. Wars, b. vii. c. 18.

^a Hostile Aratrum, Hor. l. i. od. 16.

^b Lightf. Hor. in Matt. xxiv. 2.

^c Joseph. Wars, b. vii. c. 18.

^d Hieron.

in Joel i. 4. Helii quoque Adriani contra Judæos expeditionem legimus; qui ita Hierusalem murosque subvertit, ut *de urbis reliquiis ac favillis* sui nominis Heliam conderet civitatem. Compare Petavii Animadversiones in Epiphanium de Mens. et Pond. num. 14.

^e Matt. xxiv. 2.

^f See also Luke xix. 42, 43, 44.

At this time St. Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem, affirmed the prophecy to be fully accomplished, as the historian observes, who adds, "then, or at that time, was the temple totally demolished." Socrat. Hist. Eccles. l. iii. c. 20. (Gr. ed. Col. l. iii. c. 17. *εις τελειον αναστραπτο*.) So that our Saviour's prophecy, *there shall not be one stone left upon another*, as it relates to the destruction of the temple by Titus, seems to be an hyperbolic expression, signifying an utter destruction of it; as, on the contrary, the building of it was expressed by *a stone laid upon a stone*, Hag. ii. 15. Nor is it probable that the Romans were so curious, or so much at leisure, as to pull down, or dig up every stone thereof. The term in Josephus (Bell. l. vii. c. 1. Gr.) *κατασκαπτειν*, does not import a digging or ploughing up, but *diruere eis edafos*, a levelling with the ground, (*Scapula*;) and Josephus further adds, *ουτως εξωμαλισαν*, they laid it so flat, &c. The ploughing was only a ceremony of the Romans, who used to draw a plough over a place where a city had stood which they demolished. Vide Grot. in Matt. xxiv. 2. and Glassii Philolog. Sacr. de Hyperbole. The rooting up of the foundations was in Julian's time, and then indeed was the prophecy literally fulfilled.

also long threatened, being at last executed, does sufficiently inform us, that all his sore judgments mentioned in Scripture for sin, even the eternal torments of hell, shall fall on all those who do not by hearty and timely repentance and reformation prevent the same. God is the same, as just, and as much hating sin, and as powerful; and if he at last spared not the posterity of those holy men, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whom he owned for his peculiar people, for whom he wrought so many miracles in Egypt, and divided the sea for them to pass over; whom he fed in the wilderness forty years together with food from heaven; whom he placed in the land of Canaan, and made his church above all the nations besides; to whom he sent so many prophets, and at last his only Son: if, I say, God spared not such as these, but destroyed them in so terrible a manner, how shall we escape, if we go on in the like method, to provoke so good and merciful, but withal so just and powerful, a God?

As this dreadful calamity befel the Jews in their own country, so about forty-six years afterwards (in the eighteenth year of the emperor Trajan) there was a terrible destruction of such of them as were dispersed up and down the eastern parts of the world, occasioned by their conspiracies and rebellion against the Roman governors, in the several provinces where they lived in great numbers: for they fell upon and slew both Romans and Greeks in a most savage and barbarous manner, eating their very flesh, and besmearing themselves with their blood, putting on their skins, sawing some in two, casting others to wild beasts, and forcing many to combat and slay each other. This barbarity was, by the emperor's command, soon revenged upon the whole body of the dispersed Jews, wherever they were found, with the slaughter of many hundred thousands of them^g.

^g Dion. apud Xiphilinum in Trajanum, p. 255. Euseb. Hist. l. iv. c. 2.

CHAP. XXIII.

The condition of Jerusalem and Judæa afterwards, to the present time.

AS for the city of Jerusalem, that, with the country round about it, lay for the most part as a desert, and a heap of rubbish^a: yet it seems that those surviving Jews, who submitted to the Romans, and had escaped the fury of their own seditious ones that remained, were permitted to live in quiet among the ruins of Jerusalem, (for there, afterwards, Adrian^b found synagogues, and other small buildings, and some in other parts of their country,) till their new rebellion in his time, which was thus^c occasioned: the Roman emperor Ælius Adrianus, about sixty-two years after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, repaired it, (though with some difference as to the extent thereof, excluding mount Sion, and including mount Calvary^d;) and settled a Roman colony therein, and built a temple to the heathen god Jupiter Capitolinus, in the place where the temple of God had stood, and also ordered the city to be called after his own name, *Ælia Capitolina*. Upon which the Jews were extremely offended, seeing foreigners inhabiting their city, and heathen rites performed therein; and by degrees provoked to a general revolt, being headed by a false Messiah, (one of the *false Christs and false prophets*^e;) who was called Barcoab, which signifies the son of a star, because he pretended that he was that star foretold by Balaam^f, that should come out of Jacob. Upon this Adrian sent forces against them, to their great destruction^g. The most remarkable thing happened at the siege of Bithther, a very strong place near Jerusalem, and at that time the chief

^a Joseph. Wars. ^b Epihan. de Mens. et Pond. num. xiv. et Petavii Animadversiones in eundem loc. ^c Dion. Cass. apud Xiphilinum in Adrianum, p. 262. et Euseb. Hist. l. iv. c. 6. Hieron. in Joel. i. 4. ^d Golgotha locus Calvariæ usque hodie ostenditur in Ælia. Hieronym. de Locis Hebraicis in Golgotha, tom. iii. p. 6. Vid. Erasmi Schol. in Hieron. Epitaph. Paulæ, num. lxii. tom. i. p. 67. A. Spanhemii Introd. ad Geogr. Sacr. in Descript. Hierosolymæ, p. 104. ^e Foretold Matt. xxiv. 24. ^f Numb. xxiv. 17. ^g Dion. Cass. ibid. et Euseb. ibid. et Not. Valesij. Lightfoot on the Fall of Jerusalem, §. 6.

fortified place of the Jews, where vast numbers of them were retired, and were there reduced to all the extremities of hunger and thirst, and at length subdued with a most terrible slaughter, their false Messiah being killed, insomuch that their own writers say, the horses waded in blood, and many hundred thousand perished by the sword, famine, and fire; and all their strong fortresses, together with the new city of Jerusalem, or *Ælia*, were demolished. And now the whole land of the Jews was laid waste and desolate, the nation was quite at an end, and all that were left were banished out of their country^b, and forbidden to enter into it, or so much as to look towards the place where their temple had stood, (probably lest the sight thereof should animate them to another rebellion,) only once a year, upon that day on which Jerusalem was taken, they had libertyⁱ, for a sum of money paid to the soldiers, to enter into that place where the temple had stood, and bewail the destruction of their city and temple: thereby (as one of the ancients remarks) purchasing^k their own tears, as before they purchased Christ's blood, in hiring Judas to betray him.

This banishment of the Jews from their country more particularly shews the hand of God in their destruction: for it was contrary to the general custom of the Romans to banish the inhabitants from their own countries when they had conquered them; but they were wont to send officers to govern, and exact tributes from them.

Those Jews who had escaped the general destruction, from this time became an abandoned and unsettled people, and were scattered up and down in several parts of the world, without sceptre or temple, without altar or sacrifice^l. They still retain the observation of the sabbath, circumcision, and the passover, with some other ceremonies, whereby they are distinguished from all others.

It may not be unacceptable to some readers, if we enquire briefly into the state of Jerusalem, and the country of the

^h Euseb. *ibid.* et legatur Hieron. in Zeph. i. 14. ⁱ Euseb. *ibid.* et legatur Hieron. in Zeph. i. 14. ^k Hieron. *ibid.* ^l Euseb. *ibid.* Tert. Apol. S. 21. Dispersi, palabundi, &c.

Jews, in the following ages. Adrian aforementioned, having banished the Jews, caused Jerusalem, (which he called *Ælia*,) being repaired, to be inhabited^m wholly by Romans and foreigners: upon which, the Christian church there, which had hitherto consisted of converted Jews, and fifteen successionsⁿ of bishops of the same people, now suffered a change; all Jews (whether converted Christians or not) being forbidden to inhabit Jerusalem; so that the Christian church was made up of the Gentile converts, whose first bishop was Mark^o. The emperor also employed the same stones that had served for the temple of God, in erecting Roman theatres, and idolatrous temples; and, to the greater affront of the Jews, set up at one of the gates of the city^p the effigies of a swine in marble, which beast, of all others, was most abhorred by the Jews. In this state Jerusalem continued, being since Adrian's time called *Ælia*, (as above said,) till Constantine, the first Christian emperor, when it recovered its old name of Jerusalem, both upon the account of the honour of that name, and also because of its prerogative, being the first episcopal see^q.

Constantine, (with his mother Helena,) in the year of Christ 326, built a stately church^r on mount Calvary, the place of our Saviour's crucifixion and burial, and another at Bethlehem, where he was born. But about the year 362, the apostate emperor Julian designed^s, by restoring the temple and the Jewish worship, against which Christ had pronounced so flat a doom, to prove our Saviour a false prophet and an impostor; and to that purpose had given the Jews a warrant to rebuild the temple, and afforded them all manner of encouragement, and ordered the expences, which they could not raise, to be defrayed out of his own exchequer. When all things were in readiness, and the foundations of the temple cleared or laid bare, God was pleased himself to interpose, and by sudden storms, and a dreadful earthquake, to prevent the building; the stones of the old foundation

^m Euseb. Hist. l. iv. c. 6. et Dion. Cass. *ibid*.

ⁿ Euseb. Hist. l. iv. c. 5.

^o *Ibid*. l. iv. c. 6. ^p Euseb. in Chron. ^q Valesii Not. in Euseb. Hist. l. iv. c. 6.

^r Euseb. in Vita Constant. l. iii. c. 29, ad 44. et Soc. Hist. l. i. c. 17.

^s Soc. Hist. l. iii. c. 20. confirmed by St. Chrysostom, (who was then a youth, being born anno 364. Cave.) Orat. vi. adversus Judæos, prope finem.

being torn up by the earthquake and dispersed[†]. When notwithstanding they still attempted to proceed, balls of fire consumed the tools and workmen, and forced the rest to lay aside the design. To this account, we may add the reflection which Chrysostom made upon it: “If you go now to Jerusalem, you will see the foundations lying bare and naked; and if you ask the reason, you will meet with no other account than what I have given; and hereof we are all witnesses, for these things happened *not long since in our own time*: and consider what a firm and unshaken triumph they give to our cause[‡].”

The following emperors being Christians, the country of the Jews (then called Palestine, or the Holy Land) continued thenceforwards in the Christians’ hands for the most part, for about two hundred and fifty years, till first the Persians, and afterwards the Saracens, and then the Turks, became masters thereof^{*}. This occasioned the Holy War, (as it was called,) undertaken by the Christian princes, to regain it out of the infidels’ hands; which was accomplished after it had been four hundred years and upwards in the power of the infidels. The Christians continued masters of it for somewhat above fourscore years: at the expiration whereof, they were driven out by Saladin, the sultan of Egypt; whose successors held it above three hundred years, till the year 1517, when the Turkish emperor overcame both Egypt and all the Holy Land, and his successors have continued masters thereof ever since. But the chief inhabitants of the country are the Arabians, among whom it is the policy of the Turks always to sow divisions, by setting up several heads over their tribes, called Emirs[‡]; thereby creating contrary interests and parties among them, and preventing them from uniting under one prince. These live for the most part in tents, and stay no longer in a place than the forage holds, preying upon all that come in their way^z.

Concerning the present condition of Jerusalem, (which the Turks call *Chutz*, or *Kuds*, from *Alkuds*, which signifies the

[†] The Greek edition of Socrates, lib. iii. c. 17. Colon. 1612, ἀνεβρασε τους λιθους και διαστειρε. [‡] Chrysost. *ibid.* ^{*} Heylin in Palestine, near the end thereof.

[‡] Maundrell’s Journey, Mar. 21. ^z *Ibid.*

sanctuary, or holy city,) a modern traveller ^a of good credit gives the following account: “Part of mount Sion, on the south, is without the present walls, and mount Calvary, which of old was without the walls, is now inclosed ^b within them. On this mount of Calvary is the church of Christ’s sepulchre, which at the first was built by Constantine, and the empress Helena, as hath been said. In many parts the city lies uninhabited, there being only monasteries of divers Christian sects, with their gardens, which the Turks permit for their own profit, and the great tributes which they exact from them. All the citizens are either tailors, shoemakers, cooks, or smiths, and, in general, poor rascally people, mingled of the scum of divers nations, partly Arabians, and partly Moors, and the basest inhabitants of the neighbouring countries: by which kind of people the adjoining territory is likewise inhabited;” but chiefly by Arabians, as Mr. Maundrell found ^c. “The houses ^d in Jerusalem are built of flint stone, very low, only one story high; the top whereof is plain and plastered, and hath battlements almost a yard high. In the day-time they hide themselves from the sun under their plastered floor; and after sun-set, walk, eat, and sleep upon it. By reason of the many waste places and heaps of flint lying about, and the low building of the houses, some streets seem rather ruins than dwelling-houses, to him that looks on them near hand; but to them who behold the city from eminent places, and especially from mount Olivet, the prospect of the city, and of the churches and monasteries, (which are built with elevated globes, or domes covered with brass, or such glittering metal,) promiseth much more beauty of the city to the beholder’s eyes than indeed it hath.” Like unto this is the account given by another modern traveller ^e: “The town of Jerusalem,” says he, “is still pretty large, but very ill built. It hath within its walls large places that lie desolated, and are so full of stones and rocks, that one can hardly walk in them.

^a Morison’s *Itiner.* pars i. l. iii. c. 2. Baudrand. sub Hierosolyma.

^b The

alteration in the extent of the city was made by Adrian, as above said, *ibid.*

^c Maundrell’s *Journey*, Apr. 18.

^d Morison, *ibid.*

^e Rauwolf in Ray’s

Collection of Travels, tom. i. p. 278.

The gardens, even those that are within the city, are but ill managed, surrounded with mud walls, not above four feet high: these are washed down again with rain, in a very little time, so that they want mending continually.

“ The Jews, for trafficking, live ^f for the most part upon the sea-coasts, and few or none of them come into this city: which would have no traffic, if the Christian monasteries were taken away: the principal ^g of which is that of the Latin monks, or Franciscans, who have a monastery on mount Calvary, near the temple of the sepulchre, and entertain pilgrims ^h, and other travellers that come there to see the ancient monuments and places mentioned in the holy Bible: for which the pilgrims and others, at their departure, present ⁱ them with rather more than the value of their entertainment: this brings the Turks a large yearly tribute, besides what is paid them by every one that is admitted into the church of the sepulchre, which none but the Turkish officers, who keep the keys, can give ^j admittance into. The place where of old the temple stood is overgrown with grass, and in the midst thereof the Turks have a mosque, or Turkish church, for the Mahometan worship: no Christian may come within this area, much less into the mosque, on peril of life ^k, or renouncing the Christian religion.”

Before we take leave of this miserable people, the Jews, we may further observe four instances of the Divine Providence concerning them; *first*, That forasmuch as the Jewish sacrifices were to be offered at Jerusalem, and no where else, ^l God having removed the Jews from Jerusalem, so that they could have no sacrifice for above sixteen hundred years past, plainly sheweth unto them, that their legal sacrifices were fulfilled, after the great propitiatory sacrifice of Christ had been once offered at Jerusalem ^m, and that *there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin* ⁿ, and consequently, that our Lord Jesus is the Messiah, or Christ: concerning whom Daniel prophesied ^o,

^f Morison, *ibid.* ^g Rauwolf, par. iii. c. 19. ^h Morison, *ibid.* Maundrell, Apr. 15. Rauwolf, par. iii. c. 22. and Sandys, p. 159, 200. ⁱ Maundrell's Journey, Mar. 26. ^k *Ibid.* Apr. 8. ^l Deut. xii. 11, 12, 13, 14. ^m Vide Chrysost. *adv. Jud. Orat. i. prope finem.* ⁿ Heb. x. 26. ^o Dan. ix. 26, 27.

that soon after the death of the Messiah, (after he should be *cut off*;) the city of Jerusalem and the sanctuary should be destroyed, and *the sacrifice cease*. So that the blindness and obstinacy of the Jews is the more remarkable, since they were never so long before without a temple or sacrifice. And further, this mark given by Daniel of the Messiah, that *the sacrifice should cease* soon after his death, cannot suit with any pretending Messiah, who should now come, so many ages after the sacrifice has ceased. Their argument, that the Messiah delays his coming, because of their sins, which they do not sufficiently repent of, and thereby qualify themselves to receive him, is very trifling; because if God's intuition of sin makes him defer the coming of the Messiah, his foresight of sin should have hindered him from ever promising the Messiah; forasmuch as this very impenitence of the Jews was foretold by those prophets who foretel the coming of the Messiah: and Daniel, who precisely fixed the time of his coming, at the same time foretold the destruction of Jerusalem; which supposes their wickedness and impenitence for which it was destroyed^p, and the promise of the Messiah is absolute and unalterable, not conditional.

One who was very conversant with the Jews in Barbary, hath given us his observations concerning the present obstructions of their conversion^q: *viz. first*, "Their own ingrafted perverseness, and obstinate adherence to the doctrine of their forefathers, desiring to be in no better state, nor be accounted wiser than the Sabies or wise men of their nation. *Secondly*, Because their youth are so profoundly instructed in the elements of their religion, that it is no easy task to efface the characters of their first catechism, or to pull down the fortress of education. *Thirdly*, The common sort of Jews are bound to acquiesce in the judgment of the rabbins^r, to whom they make their last appeal, when pressed with arguments too difficult for their own solution. *Fourthly*, The Christians' uncharitable dissensions and divisions, which they suppose

^p Dan. ix. 26. ^q Addison's Present State of the Jews, at the conclusion. Compare Hottinger. Thesaurus, l. i. c. 1. §. 2. p. 9. ^r They have an ancient law of their rabbins, forbidding disputes with Christians. J. Martyr. Trypho, p. 109.

proceed from a want of unity of truth in the foundation, and which they can no way make agreeable to that mutual peace and affection foretold to flourish among the professors of the true Messiah³. *Fifthly*, The ill lives of Christians, particularly in the breach of the third commandment, by horrid oaths, the worshipping of images in popish countries, and the adoration of the host: as if the Messiah could be comprehended under a wafer. *Lastly*, An expectation of being triumphantly recollected, and victoriously to reign over the Edomites, that is, all other nations, when the promise of the Messiah shall be performed: which has (as they say) so long beyond the appointed time been protracted, by reason of their own unworthiness, as hath been observed before." To which may be added, their inveterate hatred of all such as become proselytes to Christianity, even to a daily solemn pronouncing them accursed, and, where they can⁴, persecuting them to death; and, lastly, a confident reliance on the merits of their forefathers, and the promises made to them. The judicious and learned Mr. Mede thinks⁵, that under all these prejudices, the body of their nation are not likely to be converted, but in a miraculous manner, as by a voice from heaven, as St. Paul was, and the appearance of Christ to them, according to Zechariah, ^x *They shall look upon me whom they have pierced*: and that, as St. Paul was at the first like them in his zeal and hardness of unbelief, so his extraordinary conversion was a type of the calling of the Jews.

Secondly, The next instance we have of the Divine Providence concerning the Jews is, that although it is now above one thousand five hundred years since they were banished their country by Adrian, and although they have no particular place of abode belonging to them as a nation, but are scattered among all the nations of the world, and have suffered such a variety of changes and alterations: yet they are not intermixed with others, so as to be lost among them, but remain in several bodies, a distinct people. Their general profession is merchandizing, brokage, and usury. In Turkey

³ Isa. xi. 6, 7. ⁴ Hottinger, *ibid.* l. i. chap. 1. §. 3. p. 13. Buxtorf. *Synag.* c. x. p. 209. ⁵ Book iv. epist. 14, 17. and book v. chap. 2. ^x Zech. xii. 10.

they are employed' in receipt of customs; but they are as slaves and vagabonds in all countries, wherever they abide, without the honour and liberty of a nation, and without any form of being a people, *oppressed* and *crushed*^z in the several countries where they are permitted to live, as the miserable objects of the justice and vengeance of God; but withal, a most evident and standing proof of his providence and truth, in making good all that he had so often threatened in the holy Scriptures concerning them^a, and thence of the authority of the holy Scripture itself.

Thirdly, The chief cause of their former captivity and bondage, assigned by the prophets, was idolatry: but now, ever since their return from the Babylonian captivity, they have been free from that: and therefore the observation of one of the ancients, made thirteen hundred years since, is the more considerable, after so many ages more past, that they are for so long time given up by God, not for their idolatry, as formerly, but *for killing of the Messiah*^b.

Thus much was threatened them even by Moses^c, that *every soul that should not hear that prophet, should be destroyed*, as St. Peter explains that passage^d.

Fourthly, It hath been observed, that since our Saviour's death, all the plagues which were in part fulfilled before, have been more than seven times multiplied upon them; and that their continual bad usage prescribes the lawfulness of their abuse in all nations. On this occasion, the reader may peruse all those particular threatenings in Deuteronomy^e.

But after all the instances of God's judgments on the Jews, we are not to forget, that, as they were the first nation which were owned by God for his peculiar people, and therefore styled his *first-born*^f, so all nations of the world have ever since received the word of God, and the true religion from them. *To them pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenant, and the giving of the law, and the service of*

^y Sandys' Trav. p. 146. ^z As Deut. xxviii. 33. ^a As Deut. iv. 27. and xxviii. 25, 37. Jer. xxx. 11. Ezek. vi. 8. and xi. 16. Amos ix. 8, 9. ^b Hieronym. in Hos. iii. ult. ^c Deut. xviii. 19. ^d Acts iii. 23. ^e Deut. xxviii. 15, to the end. ^f Exod. iv. 22.

God, and the promises^g. Our Lord Jesus Christ, after the flesh, descended from them; he exercised his ministry only among them^h, and sent his Apostles to preach the Gospel *first* to them, *the lost sheep of the house of Israel*ⁱ. And accordingly, after Christ's ascension, *the word was first spoken to them*^k. And so the first Christian church consisted of Jewish converts^l, and all other particular churches are derived from that church, and those who were the members thereof. And however as yet they lie under the divine displeasure, yet they shall be in God's due time converted; for that *blindness in part only is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved*^m; which words are understood to be an interpretation of that ancient prophecy of Moses, *"When they be in the land of their enemies I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them to destroy them utterly;—but I will remember the covenant of their ancestors."*

Let all devout Christians take compassion on them, as Christ did, who *was grieved for the hardness of their hearts*^o. And the Apostle, though sorely persecuted by them, had *great heaviness and continual sorrow in his heart* upon their account^p. And let us implore the mercy of God for them, in the words of that excellent prayer of our Church, "Take from them, O Lord, all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy word, and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one fold under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

g Rom. ix. 4.

h Matt. xv. 24.

i Matt. x. 5, 6

k Acts xiii. 6.

l Acts ii.

m Rom. xi. 25, 26.

n Lev. xxvi. 44, 45.

o Mark iii. 5.

p Rom. ix. 2.





THE
SACRED INTERPRETER.

PART II.

CHAP. I.

Concerning the New Testament in general.

THE books of the New Testament were written by the Apostles, and other inspired persons; who were stirred up, directed, and assisted by the Spirit of God so to write, as a means to preserve the doctrine of the Gospel to the world's end. Christ often promised to the Apostles the Holy Ghost for their guide, and this promise he performed^a, when *they were all filled with the Holy Ghost*; of which he had told them, this was to be one effect^b, *He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.* Again^c, *He shall guide you into all truth.* And not only the Apostles, but many of them also who were afterwards converted, were *filled with the Holy Ghost*. And if they had this assistance and guidance of the Holy Spirit as to what they said, much more as to what they wrote; for their words were spoken to few, and might be forgotten, but their writings are for the use of all Christians, and still remain; so that they both taught the people then living, and wrote for the instruction of the church in after-ages, by the special providence of God, and the assistance of the divine Spirit; which both *refreshed their memories*, as to what they had *seen and heard*^d, and *revealed*, or suggested, what they knew not before^e.

And though St. Paul was not among them when the Holy Spirit was sent down at first, yet, at his conversion, he was *filled with the Holy Ghost*^f; and besides, he was caught up

^a Acts ii. 4.

^b John xiv. 26.

^c John xvi. 13.

^d 1 John i. 3.

^e Ephes. iii. 3, 5.

^f Acts ix. 17. 1 Cor. xiv. 37.

into heaven, and had *abundance of revelations*^a. As to what he says^b, *To the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord*; this is not to be understood as if what the Apostle spake or wrote was according to his natural reason, not of divine inspiration; but when he says, *I command, yet not I*, (or, according to the original, *Command not I*,) *but the Lord*; he might mean, that not only he so directed, but also it was founded on what Christ himself, whilst on the earth, taught against divorces^c. *So to the rest speak I, not the Lord*; that is, thus I give my advice, not as a commandment of the Lord, or, although there is not any former express Scripture or revelation of Christ concerning the marriage of a believer with an infidel.

CHAP. II.

Concerning the Four Gospels.

THE first of these books are the holy Gospels. The word *Gospel* is derived from the Saxon *Godspel*, which signifies a good word, or good tidings; because the Gospels contain the account of our Lord Jesus Christ's coming into the world to save mankind from eternal wrath and misery in hell, and to make them capable of enjoying everlasting happiness in heaven. The writers of the Gospel are called *Evangelists*, that is, they who give us the account of those good tidings. There are four of these Gospels, called, according to the names of the writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Matthew and John were two of Christ's disciples and apostles. Mark was a convert^k to the Christian faith, and a constant attendant of St. Peter the Apostle^l. Luke was also a convert to Christianity, and a companion of St. Paul^m.

There might be indeed other Christian writers, that were not apostles, besides Mark and Luke, who lived in the Apostles' times; and yet their writings do not make a part of the Scriptures, as the Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke do,

^a 2 Cor. xii. 4, 7. see also 1 Cor. xi. 23. and xiv. 37.

^b 1 Cor. vii. 10.

^c Matt. xix. 9.

^k Euseb. Hist. book ii. chap. 15. Gr. c. 14.

^l 1 Pet. v. 13.

^m Acts xvi. 10.

because these were "owned and approved by the Apostle St. John, and so received into the canon of Scripture: and however we may suppose that some of the Apostles, whilst they planted the Gospel in remote parts, might at first, for a present occasion, write more books or gospels than are now extant, (which yet cannot be known;) yet it would not follow, but that those we now have are sufficient to instruct us in all points of Christian faith and practice: for all the apostles and holy writers were taught by the same Master, Christ, and all enlightened by the same Holy Spirit; and St. John, in the same place where he acknowledges that he had omitted the relation of many things which Jesus did, intimates, that what he wrote was sufficient to salvation; for that he had written the things contained in his Gospel, that men *might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing they might have life through him, or be saved*°. Lastly, the same good Providence, which, as is now supposed, might take care for the writing of more books, when more might be necessary, has likewise taken care for the preservation of so many of those books as are now sufficient.

Furthermore, concerning the Evangelists, it appears from the ancients, that St. Matthew wrote his Gospel about eight, or between that and thirteen years after Christ's ascension^h, to correct some mistakes, and to supply the defects that were in those accounts, which the first Christians, who were Jewish converts, received concerning the doctrine, life, and death of Christⁱ. Some few years afterwards St. Mark's Gospel was written, according to what St. Peter taught, at the request of the Christians at Rome^k, and was perused and ratified by St. Peter. It hath been supposed, that St. Mark's Gospel was for the most part an abridgment, or short account^l, of what

^h Euseb. Hist. book iii. chap. 24. Gr. c. 24. *αληθειαν αυτοις επιμαρτυρησαντα.*

ⁱ John xx. 30, 31. and xxi. 25. ^p Dr. Mill's Prolegom. p. 7, supposes it later, viz. in the year of Christ 61. But see Dr. Cave on St. Matthew, ex Epiphani. Hæres. 15. and Dr. Wells's preface to St. Matthew. ^q Dr. Mill's Prolegom. p. 7, 8. Whether it was at first written in Hebrew, the reader may consult Dr. Mill's Prolegom. p. 8. and Cave on St. Matthew for the affirmative, and Hottinger's Thesaurus, l. ii. cap. 1. §. 5. for the negative. ^r Irenæus, l. iii. c. 1. Dr. Cave on St. Mark, and Euseb. l. ii. c. 15. ^s Dr. Mill, *ibid.* p. 12. and Dr. Wells's preface to St. Mark.

is contained in St. Matthew ; but by comparing them it appears', that Mark doth not always observe the same order which is in St. Matthew ; and that he gives a larger account in some particulars than Matthew doth, and that in some points of great moment, of which there are no footsteps in the other. Soon after the publishing of St. Mark's Gospel, St. Luke wrote to correct some mistaken accounts which were published of Christ's life and death amongst the Christians at Alexandria in Egypt^u. He has also mentioned what is omitted in the two former Evangelists, such as the conception and birth of John the Baptist, and of Christ himself ; the presentation of Christ in the temple ; his going up to the passover at twelve years of age, and in other instances. St. John^x, who outlived all the rest of the Apostles, and resided at Ephesus, having read the other Gospels, and approved them, made sundry additions of what was wanting, at the request of the Asian bishops, especially concerning the divine nature of Christ, affirming that he was God, in opposition to some heretical deceivers of that age. It is affirmed that this Gospel of St. John was written by him in Asia, when he was very old, at least threescore years after Christ's ascension^y.

These four Gospels, thus confirmed (as well as one of them wrote) by St. John, whilst he was living, were received as the entire canon (or catalogue of books) of the Gospel, by the primitive bishops and pastors of the church of Asia^z, where St. John resided ; and afterwards from them by the Christians all the world over, as containing the Christian doctrine ; and therefore, wherever the first successors of the Apostles afterwards planted any Christian church, they took care *to deliver to them these books of the divine Gospels*, as the ancient church historian observes^a. So that we have a plain and distinct account of the first writing, publishing, and receiving the authentic doctrine of our redemption by Christ, contained in the holy Gospels.

^u Euseb. l. ii. c. 15. Dr. Mill, *ibid.* p. 12, 13. and Dr. Wells, *ibid.* ^a Dr. Mill's Prolegom. p. 13. and Du Pin's Canon, vol. ii. chap. ii. §. 5. ^x Euseb. Hist. book iii. chap. I. Hieronym. Catalog. sub voce Johannes. Dr. Mill, *ibid.* p. 21, 22, 23. Du Pin, *ibid.* §. 6. ^y *Ibid.* ^z Dr. Mill, (ex Irenæo, l. iii. c. 11. fere ad finem) Prolegom. p. 23. See for the sense of the word *canon* or *canonical*, part i. chap. i. §. 8. ^a Euseb. Hist. l. iii. c. 37.

CHAP. III.

FOR the better understanding the holy Gospels, we may in the first place observe the following general remarks.

First remark. God was pleased to make several discoveries, from the beginning, of the Messiah, or his Son's appearance; which were still the more clear, the nearer the time approached, as it hath been briefly hinted in the first Part; and which, by the way, shew the nature of that faith which was required in the Messiah under the Old Testament; namely, according to the nature of the motives disposing one to have faith in him; that is, while they were darker, the faith was more confused; and more clear, as those became more particular and express. Immediately after the fall, it was promised that he should be born of the *seed* of the woman^b. Somewhat above two thousand years afterwards, God declared from what nation or people he should proceed, and take our nature, *viz.* from the offspring of Abraham^c. To Jacob (the grandchild of Abraham) it was revealed of what particular tribe he should come, *viz.* of *Judah*, and at what time, before the *seceptre*, or government, should *depart* from the Jews^d. After that, Moses speaks of him as a great *prophet* sent from God, and that all should hearken to him^e. Four hundred years after Moses, he is shewn not only to proceed from the tribe of Judah, but from what particular branch of that tribe, *viz.* the house of David^f. David also himself was inspired to set forth Christ more plainly, as to his death, by *piercing his hands and his feet*^g: his resurrection, that God would *not suffer his Holy One to see corruption*^h: his ascensionⁱ into heaven^j, and sitting on the right hand of God^k. Afterwards, other prophets foretold him more plainly; as Isaiah, that he should be born of a virgin^l, and suffer for us^m: Micah, that he should be born in Bethlehemⁿ: but Daniel fixed the time of his coming, *viz.* at the expiration of *seventy* (prophetical) weeks, or seventy times

^b Gen. iii. 15.^c Gen. xxii. 18.^d Gen. xlix. 10.^e Deut. xviii. 15.^f 2 Sam. vii. 16.^g Psal. xxii. 16.^h Psal. xvi. 10.ⁱ Psal. lxxviii. 18.^k Psal. cx. 1.^l Isaiah vii. 14.^m Chap. liii.ⁿ Micah v. 2.

seven years, that is, four hundred and ninety years^o. Now, since all that was foretold (either in a plain, literal, or figurative construction) concerning the Messiah, in all the different characters of him, (whether as a prophet, priest, or king,) was exactly fulfilled in our Lord Jesus Christ, and in none else; it follows, that he was the Messiah which was to come into the world; and it is not unworthy of our observation, that the Jews themselves, though they refuse to acknowledge him, are yet the most zealous assertors of the authority of those very prophecies which bear witness of him.

Further, as Christ was foretold from time to time, so, the primitive fathers observe, divers eminent persons under the Old Testament dispensation represented him in several particulars; as Enoch and Elijah, in his being carried up to heaven; Noah, as a preacher of righteousness; Melchisedeck, as king of peace, and priest of the most high God; Abraham, as the father of the faithful; Isaac, as heir of the promise, and appointed for a sacrifice; Jacob, in wrestling with the angel, and prevailing, as Christ doth with his Father, by his intercession, (and his vision of the ladder, that reached up to heaven, prefigured Christ, by whom we may climb up into heaven also;) Joseph also represented Christ, in that he was sold into Egypt, and thrown into prison, but wonderfully advanced, and thereby made the instrument of preserving his family; as Christ was sold and betrayed by Judas, cast into the prison of the grave, but miraculously raised up, to be a Saviour to his family the church; Moses, as a prophet, a lawgiver, and deliverer; Joshua^p, as giving possession of the promised land; Samson, in overcoming the enemies of the church, and completing the victory by his death; David, in being both a king and a prophet; Solomon, as a man of peace, and in raising the temple of God, which was a figure of his Church; and, lastly, Jonah, in being three days and three nights in the whale's belly, thereby representing Christ's rising from the dead the third day: and however the lives of these persons were obnoxious to

^o Dan. ix. 24, 25.

^p Joshua was a type or representation of Christ, in his name as well as office; hence he is expressly called *Jesus*, Heb. iv. 8. scil. *Jehoshua* sive *Joshua*, et *Jesus*, a verbo Heb. *Jashang*.

some stains and infirmities, yet that can no more hinder them from being representatives of Christ, than the spots on a picture hinder it from containing the delineation of the person for whom it was drawn.

It hath been remarked before, that all immediate revelation from God ceased after the return from the Babylonian captivity, and under the second temple, (except the Bath-Kol, or voice aforementioned, if that were so;) but the time approaching for the appearance of the Messiah, God was pleased to revive his former way of revelation, by an angel to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, who was the forerunner of Christ; and also to the Virgin Mary^q.

Second remark. When the time was accomplished that Christ should appear, there was a common and earnest expectation^r among the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, through great part of the eastern country, of some great prince who should *arise out of Judea, and obtain the universal dominion*. Hence the wise men, or astronomers, among the Gentiles, who lived eastward from Judea, having most probably heard of such an expectation, and likewise observed a strange extraordinary star, concluded, according to the common notion^s among the Gentiles, that it portended the birth of such a great king; and therefore they went to Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judea, to adore him^t; being directed to the place where he was, by the same star, (probably by a ray darted from the star, or the star appearing in the lower region of the air, and so low as to point out the house.) They might also have some revelation concerning the appearance of this star, or at least be illuminated or incited by the divine Spirit, as well as they were afterwards warned of God in a dream not to return to Herod^u.

^q Luke i. ^r Suetonius, l. ii. in Augusto, c. 94. Tacit. Hist. l. v. c. 13. Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret oriens, profectique Judæa rerum potirentur. Et Suetonius, l. viii. in Vespasiano, c. 4. Percrebuerat oriente toto, vetus et constans opinio, esse in fatis ut eo tempore, Judæa profecti rerum potirentur. Upon which Casaubon remarks, that much the same words being used by both the historians, they recite the very words of the oracle.

^s Virg. Ecce Dionæi processit Cæsaris astrum, vid. Grot. in Matt. ii. 2. ^t Matt. ii. ^u Verse 12. Chrysostom thought it some invisible or divine power in the shape of a star, in Matt. ii. 1.

Further, from this general expectancy it was that King Herod was so troubled at the report of those wise men, and ordered the slaughter of the children in and about Bethlehem, hoping to destroy him^x.

The expectancy above mentioned, of the birth of some great king at that time, might be in part occasioned by the heathen^y oracles, (as the devils themselves were forced to acknowledge Christ to be the Son of God^z;) but chiefly by the Jews, being dispersed all over the east, and their having filled all that part of the world with the fame of what they then looked for, *viz.* the appearance of the Messiah^a; since the prophet Daniel, as hath been shewn, had foretold when the Messiah should appear, and they knew that the time prefixed by that prophet was then expired; and Josephus assures us, that this expectancy of one that should be emperor of the world (the Messiah) was at this time so earnest, that it was one chief cause of the Jews rebelling against the Romans^b. It was also the cause of divers impostors about that time, who pretended to be the Messiah^c, and of so many Jews being seduced by them, which we do not find happened before this age of the world; no doubt, because they apprehended the time which Daniel prefixed was not expired till then^d. It was upon the account of this expectancy that Simeon is said to be waiting for the consolation of Israel, that is, the coming of the Messiah^e. For the same reason many *went out to John the Baptist*, when he published *the kingdom of heaven*, that is, the kingdom of the Messiah, *is at hand*^f: and when John had many disciples and followers, *the people mused in their hearts, whether he himself was the Christ, the Messiah, or not*^g, *viz.* whom they then expected; being taught by their doctors, or rabbies, so to understand the pro-

^x Matt. ii. ^y According to what is above cited out of Tacitus and Suetonius.
^z Matt. viii. 29. ^a Concerning the signification of the term Messiah, see what has been said on the third chapter of Genesis, Part I. ^b Wars, book vii. chap. 12. at the end, Gr. l. vi. c. 5. *Ita et Suetonius, l. viii. c. 4. in Vespas. (post antea citata verba, esse in fatis ut eo tempore, Judæa profecti rerum potirentur) id, de imperatore Romano prædictum, Judæi ad se trahentes, rebellarunt.* ^c Acts v. 36, 37.
^d Of these false Christs, see Bishop Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, part iii. c. 10. and Dr. Whitby on Matt. xxiv. 5. ^e Luke ii. 25, 38. ^f Matt. iii. 3.
^g Luke iii. 15.

phet Daniel before mentioned, and other prophecies of him, as that he was even then to appear^h. And because it was the customⁱ to strew clothes and branches in the way, in honour of great kings; and also, at the *feast of Tabernacles*, to carry branches, and sing hosannahs, (the sense of which word is an abbreviation of this sentence, *save, or prosper us, we pray*;) therefore many of the Jews, supposing Jesus to be the expected Messiah, and that he proceeded from David, *spread their garments, and strewed branches, and cried, Hosannah!* that is, *save now, this we pray for the Son of David*, or, according to the Jewish construction, *all prosperity be to the Son David*^k.

But herein was their mistake; they expected he should appear as a temporal king, who should conquer the Romans, and obtain the command of the whole world, and set them up to be the lords thereof, under him; whereby they should enjoy peace and quiet, and all temporal felicities and delights, and that in their own land; being taught so to understand the prophecies of the Messiah, in a literal sense^l.

One of the ancient Christian apologists gives this account of their mistake; *viz.* that whereas two advents of the Messiah were to be expected; the first in a state of humiliation, at his first appearance in the world; the second by a manifestation of divine glory and power, at the last day especially; by not understanding the first, they fixed wholly on the second, imagining no other appearance of Christ, but in majesty and splendour^m. And in this sense, it is saidⁿ, *they thought that*

^h See also Luke vii. 16, 17, 18, 19. John i. 41. and vi. 14, 15. ⁱ Hammond in Matt. xxi. 8, 9. ^k Matt. xxi. 8, 9. Hosannah pro Hosiab, na. Read Casaubon exercit. 16. anni 34. num. 5. and consult Robertsoni Thesaurum, sub voce Jashang, (שש) p. 373. Like the Roman acclamation, *Patri Patriæ*. Supple. *Salutem precamur*. ^l Such as Dan. vii. 13, 14, 18, 27. *To the Son of man was given dominion, and the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever.* And to the same purpose, Dan. ii. 44. Ezek. xxxvii. 25. Josephus, Wars, book vii. chap. 12. at the end. Just. Martyr. Trypho. p. 90. edit. Jebb. 1719. Lightf. Hor. in Joh. vi. 31. Hieronym. in Mic. v. 8. and in Isa. vi. 1, &c. Maimon. de Pœnitentia, cap. ix. §. 4. p. 98. edit. Oxon. et in porta Mosis, p. 158, &c. edit. Oxon. 1655. And their posterity still expect it. Buxtorf. Synag. c. 50. ^m Tertull Apolog. cap. xxi. ⁿ Luke xix. 11.

the kingdom of God should immediately appear. So also the Apostles themselves conceived, before they were more enlightened with the divine Spirit; and therefore they asked Christ when he was risen from the dead °, *Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?* According to this common notion among the Jews, Cleophas said of Christ p, *We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel*, that is, from their subjection under the Romans, and should have made them kings and princes; whereas his *kingdom*, or regal dignity and power, was *not of this world*, viz. not such as they expected; neither was it to come with observation, with that royal splendour and grandeur as they pretended, so as to be rendered conspicuous in the eye of the world, whereby men might say one to another, *lo it is here*, or *lo it is there* q: but Christ's kingdom was a spiritual kingdom on earth, not to be established with armies, but by a more divine and invisible way, by his word and holy Spirit; yet so as that his dominion and power were far above all earthly kings: viz. over devils and evil spirits, to cast them out, to cure diseases, and to rule in the hearts of men, to subdue their passions and affections, to keep down the power of sin, to break through the bars of the grave, and to bring all his subjects to an everlasting kingdom in heaven; but then, as for his outward appearance, it was to be in much humility and meanness, and suffering; he was to have no such outward *form* or *comeliness*, as they pretended, but was to be *despised and rejected of men*, a *man of sorrows*, and *acquainted with grief*, to be *wounded for our transgressions*, to be *led as a lamb to the slaughter*, and *as a sheep not to open his mouth*, and at length, to be *cut off out of the land of the living*, and to *pour out his soul unto death*, as the prophet Isaiah r and others had foretold of him.

The ancient rabbies of the Jews interpreted this prophecy to be meant s of the Messiah; but in opposition to Jesus Christ, their latter doctors have t invented two Messiahs; one

° Acts i. 6.

p Luke xxiv. 21.

q Luke xvii. 20, 21.

r Chap. liii.

s Cartwright. Mellif. Hebr. Bishop Pearson on the Creed, p. 87, and 182. edit. 4th, London. 1676.

t Bishop Pearson, *ibid.* p. 183. More particularly Dr. Pocock's appendix at the end of his commentary on Malachi.

the son of Joseph, of the tribe of Ephraim, who should suffer and die; the other the son of David, of the tribe of Judah, who should be prosperous and triumphant. But this is a mere fiction; the Scriptures never mention any Messiah of the tribe of Ephraim, but only one of the tribe of Judah, or the son of David.

Now, though Christ, in all respects, fulfilled the prophecies, yet the body of the Jews, through their mistaken expectancy of a temporal prince, conceived a great prejudice against him; because of the meanness of his birth and condition upon earth. The thoughts that he was the son of a carpenter, and of a poor woman called Mary, and of the despised country of Galilee, where he most conversed, caused many to be *offended at him*, when they heard him speak of being their Messiah or Christ, *the Son of God*, and that he *came down from heaven*^s. This also offended them, that he spake of dying, when they expected their *Christ should abide for ever*^t. Hence the multitude, who a little before, from an admiration of his miraculous works, supposing him to be the Messiah, and a conquering Prince, had cried their *hosannahs* to him, and *spread their garments before him*; at his being delivered up, cried out as loud, *Let him be crucified*^u.

Although there wanted not sufficient evidences to convince them, if they would have attended to them; as the Holy Spirit's descending on him, and a voice from heaven^v declaring him to be the Son of God; the testimony of John the Baptist, that he was *the Lamb of God*, the Christ, (although *he knew him not*, that is, by face or conversation, till he was shewn to him by the Spirit^x;) the heavenly nature of his doctrine, his casting out devils, raising the dead, and healing diseases, (insomuch that they owned, we *never saw it on this fashion*^y;) which miraculous works did evidently declare him to be the promised Messiah, who was to cure the blind, and deaf, and lame, and dumb^z, and did *bear witness of him, that the Father had sent him*, and set his seal to the truth of all that Christ said^a: so that however their law was at first

^s Mark vi. 3.^t John xii. 34.^u Matt. xxvii. 22.^v Matt. iii. 16, 17.^x John i. 33.^y Mark ii. 12.^z Isa. xxxv. 5, 6, 7.^a John v. 36, &c.

settled under Moses, by signs and wonders from heaven; yet a greater than Moses is here, to put an end to that dispensation, and by a stronger evidence establish one more perfect; for he had *done among them the works which no other man did*^v.

And what, though he spake of dying; yet they knew that he also said, he should *rise again*^c. Therefore, though he did not appear in that splendid manner, and with that earthly pomp and power, as they expected, yet his appearance was declared to be truly the appearance of *the kingdom of heaven*, or the kingdom of God, that is, the kingdom of the Messiah, which they then looked for; and which Daniel had prophesied *the God of heaven should set up*^d. So^e John the Baptist, the forerunner of this great Lord Christ, prepared the people, and bid them *repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*; that is, the coming of Christ the Messiah is now approaching (as it was revealed to him, though he then did not know him personally^l.)

And as for that other prejudice they conceived against him, from the place of his most constant abode, *viz.* Galilee, which was so despicable in the opinion of the Jews, that they affirmed, *out of Galilee ariseth no prophet*, and were surprised to hear that Christ should *come out of Galilee*^f. This proceeded from their gross ignorance of the famous prophecy in Isaiah^g; to understand which we must remember, that the chiefest part of Galilee was the land or lot of Zebulon and Naphthali: now the inhabitants of that country were the first who had the misfortune to be carried captive by the Assyrians^h; in^k recompence of which heavy disadvantage, above the rest of their brethren, Isaiah comforts them by this prophecy, that they should have the first and chiefest share of the presence and conversation of the Messiah which was to come; that people should *see a great light; upon them*, it should be said, *hath the light shined*; for, *'unto us a child is born*, &c. which prophecy is so interpreted, Matt. iv. 12—17.

^b John xv. 24. ^c Matt. xxvii. 63. ^d Dan. ii. 44. ^e Matt. iii. 2.
^f John i. 31, 33. See also Matt. x. 7. Luke ix. 2. and x. 9, 11. So in many of
Christ's parables. ^g John vii. 41, 52. ^h Chap. ix. 1—8. ⁱ 2 Kings xv. 29.
^k Mr. Mede, book i. disc. 25. ^l Ver. 6.

Christ indeed (as the Jews said he should be) was born in Bethlehem of Judea, but he was by habitation and conversation *a Galilean*; he was conceived and brought up in Nazareth of Galilee; when he began the solemn publication of his Gospel, he chose Capernaum in Galilee for his station; his disciples were *men of Galilee*; the beginning of his miracles was *at Cana of Galilee*; and the greatest part of his miracles, which he did afterwards, was in that country: in a word, his ordinary residence was in Galilee, though he came to Judea and Jerusalem at the feast-times, when the whole nation assembled there.

Further, we may here remark, that those who received the glad tidings published by Christ, were not generally *the wise and prudent*, who were possessed either with worldly wisdom, or with a conceit of their knowledge above others, as the Scribes and Pharisees: to those the Gospel was not agreeable, both because not suited to their worldly projects of laying up treasures upon earth, and also by reason of their self-conceit, and their being taken up with their numerous traditions, and vain janglings; but the babes in Christ, the humble and modest, who, having a low esteem of their own knowledge, were best qualified for the heavenly wisdom, and so most ready to receive it; and also the poorer sort, whose mean condition carried them the farthest off from the expectancy of the pleasures, honours, or riches of this world, and being inured to poverty and hardships, became the less offended with the doctrine of the cross, and the better disposed to embrace the promises of a better life^l. *Lastly*, though Christ was to be a *light*, and Saviour to the Gentiles, yet he was *not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel*^m, that is, in his own person he was to appear only among them, but he commissioned his apostles to publish him to all the worldⁿ.

Third remark. For the more distinct understanding several passages of the holy Gospels, it is requisite to enquire into the state and present condition of the Jewish people at the time of our Saviour's appearance among them, both in regard to their civil and ecclesiastical affairs. And,

^l See Matt. xi. 5, 25.

^m Mark vii. 26.

ⁿ Matt. xxviii. 19.

First, They being in subjection to the Romans^o, had little or no authority in themselves, but what was allowed them by the Roman powers, who appointed procurators, or governors^p. These had the full power of judicature in Judæa, but their chief residence was at Cæsarea, (on the coast of the Mediterranean, or Great sea.) Such an one, in our Saviour's time, was Pontius Pilate: at the same time, by the favour of the Romans, Herod Antipas, (one of the sons of Herod the Great,) called the Tetrarch, had the jurisdiction of Galilee^q.

Secondly, As for the Jews themselves, they were in some measure allowed the authority of the Sanhedrim, or Great Council at Jerusalem, which consisted of the priests and Levites, and other persons of note and learning among them^r, wherein the high-priest bore a great sway, but they had not the power of life and death^s.

Thirdly, In Christ's time the laws of God given by Moses were much perverted and abused, by false^t glosses and interpretations, especially by the Scribes and Pharisees, (whom Christ particularly names, because the former were esteemed the most learned, as the latter the most religious;) for instance, because they found not any express declarations to the contrary in the law of Moses, they took little care for the government of the mind and heart, (as appears from our Lord's asserting the design of the commandments, to extend to inward as well as outward guilt^u, in opposition to them; nor how they approved themselves before God in secret, so they did but carry themselves fair, in appearing to fulfil the law; whence our Lord instructed men to exceed the righteousness of such, by inward purity of heart^x. Again, it seems, some of them taught only a partial obedience to the commandments, as if there were no danger in transgressing some of them; whence Christ assures, *Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven*^y. They were also generally mistaken in being very punctual in performing

^o See Part I. chap. xxi. ^p Ibid. chap. xxii. ^q Ibid. chap. xxi. ^r Ibid. chap. xiv. ^s Ibid. chap. xxii. ^t Grot. in Matt. v. 20. ^u Matt. v. 21, &c. ^x Matt. v. ^y Matt. v. 19.

the externals of religion, or the outward carnal rites, relying wholly upon the very doing the work, and esteeming a mere bodily service as meritorious, by a bare observance of the letter of the law, without attending to the inward and spiritual righteousness^z, which was most acceptable to God; but Christ declared^a, *The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth*; which does not suppose that God, under the Gospel, requires only a spiritual, and not an external worship; for this last is according to the ordinances of the Gospel, which appoints the holy sacraments, prayer, and thanksgiving; and encourages, by the example of our Saviour and the Apostles, a worshipping with the proper and reverend gestures of the body, as bowing or falling down, kneeling, &c. but the worshipping the Father *in spirit and in truth*, is to worship him, not in types, and with the carnal sacrifices under the law, (which were now to cease, and in the outward performance of which the Jews chiefly confided,) but according to the truth of things^b which were only shadowed in the law, but manifested in Christ; and according to the spiritual worship under the Gospel, that is, with a pure heart, and by devout prayers and praises, and a holy conversation. This appears to be the meaning of this passage, from the occasion of Christ's mentioning it, in answer to the Samaritan woman's question, concerning the true place of the Jewish worship, and their outward typical sacrifices, whether at Jerusalem, or mount Gerizim^c.

Again, besides the written laws, the Jews, especially the Pharisees, (a great sect among them,) had "oral and unwritten traditions^d," that is, interpretations of the law, and many customs, which they pretended Moses had not written down, but, being instructed by God therein, taught by word of mouth; and so they were conveyed first by Joshua, then

^z The same which Justin Martyr laid to their charge, Dial. cum Tryph. p. 44. edit. Jebb. Lond. 1719. ^a John iv. 23. ^b Grot. in loc. and Mede, book i. disc. 12. ^c John iv. 10, 21. See the first part, chap. 20. concerning this mount Gerizim in Samaria. ^d Maimon. Porta Mosis, p. 5, 33, &c. and 35. Hottinger. Thesaur. p. 560. l. ii. c. 3. §. 3. Lightf. Hor. in Matt. xv. 2. et in Mark viii. 12. Grot. in Matt. xv. 2.

by the elders of the Sanhedrim or council, and others, from age to age, down to their time, as so many fences of the law; such as washing their hands before meat, washing pots and cups, &c. and this they were taught to do, not so much for cleanliness, as upon the score of conscience and religion, for fear of any legal defilement that might have happened to such parts or things: for they had taken up an opinion, that any thing which was touched by a person unclean by the law, did communicate such an uncleanness to their bodies, and then to their souls; but that this ceremonial washing did purify both body and soul, and therefore was pleasing to God. In the performance of these, and such like, they put most confidence, and taught them to be “necessary and good in themselves,” and of “equal force” with the written law; nay, they esteemed such traditions above^e the law, it being a maxim amongst them, that “it is a greater sin to act in contradiction to the words of the Scribes, than of the written law; and that the former ought to be more attended to than the latter, the written law being as the body or clothing, but the unwritten as the soul:” directly contrary to the instructions of the old prophets, who, on all occasions, refer the people to the written law of Moses. This remark will explain a great part of Christ’s sermon on the mount^f, and of his discourses with the Scribes and Pharisees, who were much bent against him, for exposing their hypocrisies and corruptions of the law, and for preaching down their traditions.

This remark does also explain what our Saviour means by this^g, *In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*; not that all commandments of men, or of the governors of the church, (in things indifferent, and tending to decency, order, and edification in religious worship,) are here condemned; on the contrary, St. Paul enjoins such orders to be observed^h; but such commandments, or traditions, which our Lord is here speaking ofⁱ, which the Jewish Scribes and Pharisees taught for doctrines, imposing them as necessary, as if they were of equal authority with

^e Hottinger and Lightfoot, *ibid.*

^f Matt. v. vi. vii.

^g Matt. xv. 9.

^h 1 Cor. xiv. 26. and last verse.

ⁱ Verse 2.

God's laws, and good in themselves, as we observed before the Jews esteemed their traditions; and also whereby they *made the commandments of God of none effect*^k.

By the two last remarks, we also see how it came to pass, that, although Christ did so much good, and fulfilled all prophecies, and wrought so many wonderful works, yet he was so hated by many of the Jews, especially the Scribes and Pharisees, and not owned as their Messiah, namely, because his outward appearance was so mean, and yet he professed himself to be the Son of God; and because he was so free in laying open their hypocrisies and abuses of the law, and reliance on their traditions: so that even truth itself, because it was unacceptable, and against their inclinations and former persuasions, could not gain a consent; but was stifled and overpowered by the prevailing force of their affections and prejudice, which indisposed them for an equal judgment of things; insomuch, that they consulted to put Lazarus to death, on whom Christ had shewn so signal a miracle, by raising him from the dead, in order to stifle the belief in him^l; and at length became so obstinate and malicious, that they would rather attribute the most convincing miracles to *the prince of devils*, than the power of God. So truly did the Jews, by hardening their hearts, and shutting their eyes, fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah^m; and so much reason had Christ to charge them with their prejudice and obstinacyⁿ, till they were abandoned by God, and given up to their own hardness and impenitency; which however made way for the execution of what God had purposed, to save mankind by the death of Christ; in procuring which they would never have been instrumental, had they known and heartily believed in him.

Further, such was the veneration they had for the law and their traditions, that it occasioned their resolutions to put Christ to death; for, since there was then a general expectancy of the appearance of the Messiah, whom they fancied to be a temporal prince, they were apprehensive that so many people following Christ, he should set up for such an one, and that

^k 1 Cor. xiv. 5, 6. ^l John xii. ^m Chap. vi. 9, 10. ⁿ Matt. xiii. 14, 15.

might raise the jealousy of the Romans, to whom they were in subjection, and so far incense them, as to *come and take away their place and nation*^o, that is, destroy their temple, with their religion and government, and bring them to perfect slavery; to prevent which, they would put Christ to death; which very action brought that judgment on them, as hath been seen before.

To what has hitherto been said, concerning the cause of the unbelief of the Jews, *viz.* their misapprehensions of the appearance of the Messiah, as if it were to be like a temporal prince, and also their veneration for their law and traditions; we may further add their prejudice against the doctrine of the Gospel, because it equalled them (who were the posterity of Abraham, and God's peculiar people) with the other nations and people of the world, as to their title in God's covenant and promises^p. Against all these strong prejudices, Christ opposes his miraculous works, without which the unbelieving Jews would have been more excusable^q: *If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated me and my Father.*

Fourthly, There were in Christ's time, among the Jews, several orders and conditions, with divers sects and parties. Those whom they called Gentiles^r, were all the people of the world who were not Jews, or not of the posterity of Abraham: these are also called Greeks^s. Those of the Gentiles who worshipped the God of Israel were termed *proselytes*.

A *proselyte*^t (which signifies one that came over^u, and joined himself to the Jews) was twofold, either a proselyte of the *covenant*, or else a proselyte of the *gate*.

A *proselyte of the covenant* was one, who being a Gentile, no Jew by birth, yet, when instructed in the law of Moses, took upon him the sign of the covenant by being circumcised, and also baptized before two witnesses: then he submitted to

^o John xi. 48. ^p Of this see the account given of the Acts of the Apostles, on chap. x. ^q John xv. 24. ^r ἔθνη, Matt. iv. 15. ^s Ἕλληνες, Acts xviii. 17.

^t Casaubon. Exercit. l. §. 3. num. v. p. 24, 25, 26. Mede, book i. disc. 3. Hottinger. Thesaur. l. i. cap. i. §. 3. p. 16, &c. Prideaux's Connect. part ii. book v. sub Ann. 129. ^u Ἄ προσηλυθῆναι.

the whole law, and so became a Jew, living and worshipping God as the Jews did, and differed nothing from a Jew, only he was not born so, but made a Jew, being esteemed by them as a *new-born* child^x. While their temple stood, such a proselyte was received by the offering of a sacrifice^y, as well as by circumcision and baptism.

A *proselyte of the gate* was a Gentile who inhabited within the gates of Israel, or among the Jews; and having renounced idolatry, worshipped the true God of Israel, yet was not circumcised, nor obliged to observe the ceremonial law, but only to keep the seven precepts of Noah; *viz.* (as the Jews reckoned them,) to cast off idols; to worship the one true God; to commit no murder; not to be defiled with fornication; to avoid rapine, theft, and robbery; to be careful in administering justice; and, lastly, to abstain from eating blood; (which have been spoken of before, concerning the state of mankind after the flood.) Such a one was called a devout or worshipping man or woman^z. This last kind were still esteemed Gentiles, and so called because of their uncircumcision, and were according to the law unclean, and such as no Jew might converse withal, nor were they properly members of the Jewish church; but they were admitted into the Jewish temple and synagogues, and to the hopes of the life to come, because they worshipped the true God only; yet, while the temple stood, they were not suffered to come into the *courts of Israel*, but into the outward court, called the *court of the Gentiles*^a.

Tetrarchs, as Herod's sons were called, who governed after him, as hath been already shewn.

Centurions, or officers over an hundred soldiers.

Publicans^b, who were the collectors, and sometimes farmers or renters of the impositions or taxes which the Romans exacted of the Jews: they were often grievous oppressors, and therefore very odious to the Jews, especially if those officers were Jews themselves, as sometimes they were; as Matthew,

^x Compare John iii. 5, 10. ^y Casaub. &c. ut supra. ^z Acts x. 2. and xvi. 14. ^a See the last-mentioned authors. ^b Grot. et Lightf. Hor. in Matt. v. 46.

before his being called by Christ to be an apostle, and Zaccheus. Besides, the Jews, of all people, were for liberty, and abhorred all subjection to any of another nation; and since they took the payment of taxes for a sign of slavery, no wonder they should so detest the collectors of them.

Scribes^c, whose office was to copy out of the book of the law of Moses, and being well versed therein, to explain the meaning thereof; as also to interpret the Jewish traditions; they are therefore sometimes called lawyers.

Rabbies, doctors, or teachers.

Pharisees, the strictest sect among the Jews, who appeared to be the most nice observers of the law of Moses, and of the traditions of their elders or doctors; accordingly, their name was given them from *Pharas*, a word which signifies to divide or separate from others: from the opinion of their own goodness, they despised all others besides their own party, and therefore upbraided our Saviour, that he accompanied *with publicans and sinners*. By their shew of religion, they procured a great esteem of themselves, and had a mighty influence on the government, and the people in general; insomuch that one of the Maccabees, by opposing them, *put himself and his sons quite out of credit with the common people*. But how religious soever they might be in their way, they were not sincere, but were great hypocrites; their aim being *to be seen of men*^d. And they were very covetous, “engrossing the profits of the government,” proud and censorious^e. Scribes and Pharisees are often joined together in the Gospel; but the Scribes were of an office, the Pharisees of a sect; and both condemned by Christ for making their traditions to be of equal authority with the written law, and for their hypocrisy and covetousness; and for *making broad their phylacteries*, that is, strips^g of parchment, which they wore on their foreheads, on which were written some sentences of the law, (the word *phylacteries* signifying keepers or preservers,)

^c Hottinger's Thesaurus, l. i. c. ii. p. 74. Lightf. Hor. in Matt. ii. 4. ^d Matt. xxiii. 5. ^e Joseph. Antiq. book xviii. chap. 2. and book xiii. chap. 18. and Wars, book i. chap. 4. Pocock's Not. Miscell. ad Portam Mosis, p. 351, &c. ^f Matt. xxiii. 5. ^g Lightf. in loc.

and this they did by mistaking the spiritual sense of Exod. xiii. 16. that the law should be *for frontlets between thine eyes*, and understanding them literally, as serving to keep the law in continual memory. Now these phylacteries, for the greater ostentation and shew, they made very broad, that they should be the more observed by the people; and to the same end also, *enlarged their borders*, or fringes, *of their garments*, which were appointed to make people mindful of God's commands^b.

Sadducees, who denied^l any interposition of God in men's actions, whether they did good or evil, but that they were left to themselves. They also denied a future state, or reward after this life^k; which errors it is believed they fell into from one Sadoc, who, mistaking the words of his master Antigonus, *viz.* that "men should serve God, not as mercenaries, for what they got by him, but for himself, without expectation of reward," came to espouse those errors^l. And as a consequence thereof, they believed not the immortality of the soul, nor the resurrection from the dead, or that there were *angels or spirits*^m. Josephusⁿ observes, that there were not many of them, but that they were persons of the higher rank; however, that they were obliged to renounce their principles, when they bore any public office, and to comply with the contrary sentiments of the Pharisees; otherwise the people would not endure them.

Their principles had bad effects on them, for they were observed to be men of "rough ill manners", even one towards another." Josephus further remarks, that the "Pharisees had many traditions handed down from the fathers, which are not to be found among the laws of Moses, and which are rejected by the Sadducees, upon a persuasion that only the written laws are authoritative and binding:" he also adds, that "the Sadducees were supported by men of quality and substance, the Pharisees only by the favour of the multitude"."

^h Numb. xv. 38, 39. ⁱ Somewhat like Pelagius. See Joseph. Wars, book ii. chap. 7. and compare Grot. in Matt. xxii. 23. ^k Joseph. Antiq. book xviii. chap. 2. ^l Hottinger. Thesaur. l. i. cap. 1. §. 5. p. 34. Lightfoot Hor. in Matt. iii. 7. ^m Acts xxiii. 8. ⁿ Joseph. ibid. ^o Joseph. de Bell. Gr. l. ii. cap. 8. ^p Joseph. Antiq. b. xiii. chap. 18.

Herodians, whom Tertullian and others of the ancients affirm to be so called, because they believed Herod to be the Messiah ; but others rather esteem them to be a party of the Sadducees, who adhered to Herod and his family, and espoused their interest and grandeur^q. Hence *the leaven of the Sadducees*, in Matt. xvi. 6. is called in Mark viii. 15. *the leaven of Herod*. Their particular tenet is not expressed ; it might be a compliance with the civil government, by breaking through the commands of God ; as Josephus accuses Herod himself of doing many things contrary to the law and religion, to ingratiate himself with the heathen emperor^r.

Zealots. Of these see what is said in the former part, concerning the siege of Jerusalem by Titus.

Essenes, who began about the time of the Maccabees, when the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes, mentioned before, forced many Jews to retire to woods and deserts. They lived in a very abstemious manner, and were very strict in some duties of religion ; and, in many particulars, according to the doctrines of Christianity ; but they could not be Christians, as some have fancied ; for, living in retirement for the most part, we never read they had any conversation with Christ or his disciples ; and amidst the accounts given of this sect^s, we find nothing of the redemption of the world by Christ, nor of the Christian sacraments ; nor the resurrection of the body, which they denied, though they owned a future state, either happy or miserable, and many of their peculiar doctrines are condemned in the New Testament^t.

Samaritans, the posterity of those Assyrians, who were sent to Samaria by Salmanezar, when the kingdom of Israel was destroyed, as hath been said. These had, a long time before Christ's appearance in the world, renounced all their Pagan idolatries, (as it is believed, about 120 years after the settlement of the Jews, upon their return from the Babylonian captivity, by Nehemiah,) and embraced the Jewish religion^u;

^q Ham. and Lightf. Hor. in Matt. xxii. 16. Prideaux's Connect. part ii. book v. sub Ann. 107. ^r Antiq. book xv. chap. 12. at the end. ^s Joseph. Wars, book ii. chap. 7. Antiq. book xviii. chap. 2. Hotting. Thesaur. l. i. c. 1. §. 5. p. 38, 39. ^t Prideaux's Connect. part ii. book v. ^u See the former Part, chap. xx.

but they owned only the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses, to be the holy Scriptures; and worshipped at mount Gerizim, in Samaria, as the Jews did at Jerusalem; so that for three chief causes, *viz.* their proceeding from the strange nations of the Assyrians before mentioned; the mixture at first of the Jewish and Pagan religion together; and their temple and sacrifices at mount Gerizim, in opposition to those at Jerusalem; there arose and still continued a great hatred and difference between the Samaritans and the Jews^x, insomuch, that the Jews thought they could not more reproach Christ, than by saying that he was a Samaritan, and (which they accounted came all to one) *had a devil*^y.

Fourth remark. Christ came not to *destroy*, or make void, *the law and the prophets*, but to *fulfil*^z; that is, first, To make good in himself, what was signified and shadowed by many parts of the law of Moses, to give substance instead of shadows. Secondly, To make clearer revelations of God's love to mankind, and *better promises*^a, not of temporal blessings only, but of spiritual and eternal ones. For although some *had respect unto the recompence of the reward hereafter*, and looked for a *better country*, that is, *an heavenly*^b; yet the generality of the Jews attended more to the rewards promised in this life; such as victory over their enemies, a prosperous condition, and such like; which, on the performance of the law, they were chiefly to expect^c. And although their doctors taught a resurrection and the state of happiness after this life, yet their doctrines were loose, uncertain, and different from each other; some placing the happiness in carnal delights, and such as men value in this world; others in a more spiritual enjoyment of God, and knowledge of him^d. Thirdly, Christ came to fulfil the law, that is, more fully to explain the grand design of it, by shewing the sublimity or height of the commands, according to their full extent and intention, and by setting forth the spiritual import of them,

^x John iv. 9. ^y John viii. 48. ^z Matt. v. 17. ^a Heb. viii. 6. ^b Heb. xi. 16, 26. ^c Deut. vi. ^d Alii in resurrectione, alii in diebus Messiaë, alii in mundo futuro. See at large Maimon. Porta Mosis de fundamentis, p. 133, &c. and Pocock's Not. Misc. chap. vi. particularly page 90—114.

together with those rules and precepts of inward purity and holy life, which he hath given us in the Gospel; for one great design of the law was to make men really virtuous and good, by worshipping the true God, and trusting in him, and by loving and doing good one to another. Hence, even in the law itself, they are commanded to *love the Lord their God with all their soul*^e, and to *circumcise the foreskin of their hearts*^f. So that the law, at first, was like a picture rudely drawn, with a coal or pencil; but Christ's fulfilling the law was like the painter's finishing the picture, filling it up, and drawing it to the life.

Hence it appears, that the Jews themselves, though they pretended so much zeal for the law of Moses, yet by their misinterpretations, and keeping to the letter of the law, so as not to attend to the substance of what many of the Levitical ordinances were but shadows, nor to the spiritual meaning of them; I say, by this means, the Jews themselves destroyed the law, as to the grand design and intent of it; and Christ truly fulfilled, accomplished, and perfected it.

Thus much for Christ's *fulfilling the law*. In the next place, we are to observe what the Scripture saith of Christ's *fulfilling the prophecies*, so often mentioned in the Gospel; as Matt. i. 22. *All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, &c.* and in many other places. Some observe^g, that the particle *that* sometimes signifies not a cause or end, but only a consequence, and is of the same signification with *so that*; and therefore they render the aforementioned passage thus, "By the doing of all this it fell out so, that an ancient prophecy was fulfilled;" to strengthen which, it hath been furthermore observed, that all those circumstances of Christ's birth happened not to the end such prophecies should be fulfilled, but for the salvation of mankind. But to this it is replied^h, that there are several ends or causes of the same thing set forth in different places. Soⁱ one end of Christ's suffering is said to be the *leaving us*

^e Deut. vi. 5. ^f Deut. x. 16. ^g Hammond, &c. ex Grot. ^h Grotius et Spanhemius in Matt. i. 22. and Whitby's Appendix to the Gospel of St. Matthew.
ⁱ 1 Pet. ii. 21.

an example of meekness and patience; but there were other more eminent ends of Christ's sufferings, *viz.* that he might *reconcile us unto God*^k. So^l one end of Christ's being born of a virgin, &c. was, *that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet*. Another,^m *to save his people from their sins*. So that there seems no necessity to depart from the plain sense of the expression, *That it might be fulfilled*; that is, such things were done, to the end that such a prophecy might be fulfilled, or, that it might appear that by such actions Christ did most signally accomplish such a prophecy concerning the Messiah. Not but that some of the prophecies, mentioned to be fulfilled by Christ in the Gospel, might at first be understood in the primary and literal sense, relating to the Jews; but the Holy Ghost teaches us, that they are also to be understood in a higher and mystical sense, in respect to Christ the Messiah, as hath been observed before in the third general remark on the prophets.

It is objected against this plain interpretation of the words, *That it might be fulfilled*, from John xii. 38. where it is said, the Jews believed not in Christ, that the saying of Isaiah might be fulfilled, *He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts*, &c. it being improper to affirm, they believed not, that this prediction might be verified: but then it is to be considered, first, That according to the propriety of the Jewish language, (often imitated in the New Testament,) by an action said to be done, is meant sometimes *a declaring*, or *permitting it to be done*ⁿ; and then the sense would be, they believed not that the saying of Isaiah might be declared or shewn fulfilled. Secondly, That the Jews, by their own hardness of heart, had provoked God to leave them to their blindness and infidelity, and to permit them to continue in it; and the cause of this permission at that time was, that the saying of Isaiah might be fulfilled, which foretold that such an infidelity should happen in the days of the Messiah. So that although the proper cause of their infidelity was their own

^k Eph. ii. 16.

^l In the forementioned place, Matt. i. 22.

^m Matt. i. 21.

ⁿ As hath been proved in Part I. chap. i. §. 9. Numb. xxi.

hardness of heart^o, yet the final cause of the Divine permission of that infidelity was, that the saying of Isaiah might be fulfilled. From all which it follows, that although it may be granted in some respects, things were not effected merely for the sake of such prophecies, but that such prophecies were uttered because the things were to be effected; yet since it was God's decree, that such a thing should come to pass, as our redemption by Christ, notwithstanding he foresaw that the Jews, being left to their infidelity, would be the more hardened therein, and since it was also his pleasure, that their infidelity should be foretold by his prophets, it was therefore done, that God might execute his decree, which he had before declared by his prophet^p.

Fifth remark. Our Lord is often termed in the Gospel, *the Son of God*; and by St. John he is called, *the Word*.

The ancient Jews understood the words^a, *I will declare the decree; The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*, to be meant of the Messiah, whom they expected^t; insomuch, that about our Saviour's time, the title of *the Son of God* was understood to belong to the Messiah or Christ; and therefore Nathanael said unto Jesus, *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel*^t; and Martha, *I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, that should come into the world*^t. Now, whatever notion the Jews had of the Messiah being *the Son of God*, (which seems to be obscure and uncertain about the time of our Lord's appearance in the world, when they dreamed so much of his being a temporal king,) we can have no other notion of the terms *Father* and *Son* in the proper sense, which it appears the Jews understood him in^u, but that they denote persons of the same nature; and however this term *Son of God* be in general sometimes attributed to creatures; as to Adam,

^o S. Augustinus, tract. 53. in Johannem. Quidam inter se mussitant, dicentes, quid fecerunt Judæi? vel quæ culpa eorum fuit, si necesse fuit ut sermo Esaiæ impleretur? quibus respondemus, Deum præscium futurorum, per prophetam prædixisse infidelitatem Judæorum: prædixisse tamen, non fecisse. ^p See Grot. in Matt. i. 22. ^q Psalm ii. 7. ^r Grot. in Matt. xiv. 33. Cartwright. Mellific. Hebr. l. i. cap. 5. See also Psalm lxxxix. 26, 27. ^s John i. 49. ^t John xi. 27. See also Matt. xxvi. 63. ^u John iii. 16, 17, 18. and v. 17, 18.

and the angels, in regard to their original being from God, and to the ancient Jews and Christians by adoption; yet it is hard to give a just reason, why the Scripture should style the true God as being emphatically *the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*^x, and also should style Christ not only *the Son of God*, but *the only-begotten of the Father*^y, and *his own Son*^z, unless it were with the design that we should apprehend by this propriety and singularity, that he so derived himself from the Father, as being a proper Son of God, of the same uncreated essence with the Father, (as the terms *father* and *son* import among us,) but in so transcendent a manner, that we cannot conceive or define it. Indeed, in the order of nature, a father, as being the begetter or producer, is to be supposed to have a being first or prior to the son begotten or produced; and yet the Son of God is equally infinite with the Father; for in this argument we have nothing to do with the ordinary course of nature: the essence which God always had without beginning, without beginning he did communicate, being as well always Father, as always God; of which we have a faint resemblance in the sun, which is the producer of heat and light, and yet its heat and light is as ancient as itself; nor can one conceive a moment in which the sun was without them, though we cannot account for it; no more can we comprehend how God should have his being from himself, or from all eternity; and yet that is not the less true.

Furthermore, St. John calls Christ *the Word*^a; *In the beginning was the Word*, even then subsisting^b, or in being, *and the Word was with God*, as the second person may be said to be with the first, or the son with the father, *and the Word was God*; in which last sentence, the term *God* must be understood in the same sense, as it was in the former *with God*, to signify him who is truly and properly God as to his essence^c; or else the Apostle must be supposed to leave

^x Coloss. i. 3. ^y John i. 14. and iii. 16. ^z Rom. viii. 32. ^a John i. 2, 3.

^b Grot. in loc. jam tum erat. Therefore he did not then begin to be.

^c The want of the article, in John i. 1. is no objection; for as $\Theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ expresses the Father without an article, John i. 6. so $\delta\ \Theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ with an article expresses the Son, Matt. i. 23. See Bishop Pearson on the second Article of the Creed, and Dr. Waterland's Defence.

Christians liable to a great and dangerous mistake, by reason of the doubtful meaning of his words, which ought not to be charged upon him, or rather the Holy Ghost. It follows, *The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* Now hereby St. John shews, that the same who made, did also redeem the world: for the Jews understood that divine Being, by whom the world was created, by the term *the Word*^d; Moses having written^e, *God SAID, Let there be light, and there was light*, and so on of the rest of the creation. Hence the Psalmist, *by the word of God the heavens were made*^f, which St. Peter imitated^g, *by the word of God the heavens were of old.* It seems also, that this term *Logos*, or *the Word*, in this sense, was gotten very early among the heathen, (probably by tradition from the Jews dispersed among them,) whereby they expressed the power of God in making the world^h: so that both Jews and Gentiles were in St. John's time well acquainted with the expression, and easily comprehended the meaning of it. By this it seems plain, that since he that *made or built all things is God*ⁱ, St. John intended to be understood so, as to shew that Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, being that *Word*, by whom all things were made, could not be himself a creature, but had a subsistence with the Father in the beginning, and was himself, together with the Father, one true eternal God^k. And this

^d As the Chaldee Paraphrase; see Grot. in Joh. i. 1. et De Verit. Rel. Christianæ, l. v. §. 21. Ham. in Luc. i. not. 2. Bishop Pearson on the Creed, Artic. II. *His only Son*, p. 117. edit. 4. Lond. 1676. And although Dr. Lightf. (Hor. in Joh. i. 1.) observes, that the Chaldee *mimra* (*the word*) does sometimes signify only *ego*, *tu*, and *ipse*, and is applied to men; yet the two last instances given by Bishop Pearson shew plainly the application thereof only to God; as Gen. i. 17. *God created man*, is rendered, *The word of the Lord created man*: and Gen. iii. 8. *They heard the voice of the Lord God*, is rendered, *They heard the voice of the word of the Lord God.* Compare another writer's observation to the same purpose, (who must be allowed sufficiently conversant in the Jewish rabbinical learning,) Bishop Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, part iii. chap. 5. ^e Gen. i. 3. ^f Psal. xxxiii. 6. ^g 2 Pet. iii. 5. ^h Grot. in Joh. i. 1. Ham. in Luc. i. not. 2. ⁱ Gen. i. 1. Heb. iii. 4. ^k Compare Rev. xix. 13. and also Heb. i. 10—13. where the Apostle applies to Christ what the Psalmist had said of Jehovah, the God of Israel, the Maker of heaven and earth, Psal. cii. 25, &c.

interpretation of St. John's words in the Gospel is further confirmed by St. John himself^l, where the absolute eternity of the Son of God is described in the same words, as that of the Father is, *I am the first and the last*^m. It is manifest, that St. John brings in Christ so speaking, because he adds, *I am he that liveth, and was dead*. Now Isaiah brings in the Father thus speakingⁿ, *Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God*. To this we may add the words of Irenæus, who was trained up under Polycarp, St. John's disciple, "Neither the Lord, nor the Holy Spirit, nor the Apostle, would have called him, who was not God, by the name of God, at any time, if he had not been truly God^o."

This doctrine we are the more confirmed in, by Christ's appointing to baptize *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*^p. Now whether we understand the words *in the name*, on the minister's part, to signify, *by the authority and commission of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*; or that by the person's being baptized *in* or *into* their name, is signified *his profession of faith in all three*, and his being as it were *listed under, and dedicated to their service*; it is plain, that hereby Christ sets every person in an equality, without any the least note of distinction, (more than that of a *personal* relation,) and that in the case of entering one into covenant with the true God, in opposition to the heathen gods, and of placing a sinner in a state of reconciliation with God, and eternal salvation; which can only be offered and assured to men, in the name of the great and eternal God.

Here it may be proper to explain to the common reader the sense of the Christian church in two respects; 1st, Concerning the three *persons* in the Godhead; 2^{dly}, Of Christ's being said to be God of the *substance* of the Father.

As for the *first*, By a *person* is not meant such a being as we commonly understand by that word, *viz.* a complete in-

^l See at large Dr. Waterland's Defence of Queries.

^m Rev. i. 17.

ⁿ Isaiah xli. 4. and xliv. 6.

^o Irenæus, l. iii. cap. 6. ad initium.

^p Matt.

xxviii. 19.

telligent being, distinct from every other being; but thus those three, *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, are in Scripture spoken of with as much distinction from one another, as we use to speak of three several persons, and yet they having equal attributes and perfections ascribed to them, are understood to partake of one and the same nature. So that the Church asserts three persons on the account of divine revelation, but in such a manner as to be agreeable to the Divine nature; which being infinite, is not, like our finite nature, capable of multiplication, separation, or division. These three persons are distinguished in Scripture by their personal properties; *viz.* either those which are *internal*, as having relation to each other; so it is the property of the *Father* to beget the *Son*, of the *Son* to be begotten of the *Father*, and of the *Holy Ghost* to proceed from the *Father* and the *Son*: they are also distinguished by those properties which are *external*, as having relation to the creatures, especially to the members of the church; so the creation of the world is in Scripture more particularly ascribed to the *Father*, the redemption to the *Son*, and the sanctification of God's people to the *Holy Ghost*.

2dly, As for Christ's being said to be *God of the substance of the Father*, it is not to be understood as if God the Father were supposed to be endued with any bodily substance, such as goes under that name in things on earth; for he is a spirit; or that the Divine nature is capable of division or separation, as bodily substances are; and therefore in this case there is no reasoning from bodily and sensible things. And although Christ was made *man of the substance of his mother*, as children are of their mother's substance, or a branch is of the substance of a tree, &c. yet we are not to conceive so of the Divine nature; and therefore, when it is said that the *Son* is begotten or derived, it is not to be understood that he is of a distinct substance, or is a distinct being, but a distinct person. The word *consubstantiality*, as to Christ, is a term taken up by the Church in opposition to heretics, chiefly Sabellius and Arius; the former of which, about the year 260, pretended that there was no difference between the Persons in the

Trinity, but that they were all one Person under three names; and Arius, about the year 306, would understand Christ to be only a creature, and to have had a beginning, denying his divinity, yet acknowledging him, by reason of his excellency, to be styled God in Scripture. And because those heretics and their followers made use of several evasive and coined expressions, and sheltered themselves under ambiguous terms, the fathers of the Nicene council fixed on the term *substance*, and *consubstantial*, (or of the same being,) which was not a term then newly used, but had been applied to the same purpose before, and was esteemed most fully to preserve the order and distinction of the persons Father and Son in the Holy Trinity, together with the essential divinity of the Son, without destroying the unity; as signifying the Son's being not a *creature*, or only God by *name*; but as partaking of the Divine nature, and enjoying all the essential perfections of the Father in common with him, as it is set forth in the holy Scripture; so as that the Son be acknowledged as one and the same God, together with the Father⁹: but the manner being not revealed, and inconceivable to us, the Church hath not determined it.

To conclude this account of Christ's being styled *the Son of God*, and *the Word*, in the holy Gospel; we find that to him, as to the Father, are ascribed the same titles of *Lord* and *God*, the same high powers, attributes, and perfections, and also the same adoration, honour, and worship; and yet in the Scripture it is also constantly asserted, that there is but *one God*, or that *God is one*; and therefore, by the Scripture, the Father and the Son, with the Holy Ghost, are in essence or being that *one God*. But we are not to expect, that, searching into *the deep things of God*, our finite reason and understanding should ever be able to comprehend (at least on earth) his infinite nature, not only in respect to the Trinity, but in many other regards besides; as how God is eternal, without any beginning; how he foreknows future

⁹ Socrates, Hist. Eccles. l. i. c. 5, 6, 7, 8. and l. iii. c. 25. Theodor. l. iv. c. 2. Bishop Pearson on the Creed, Artic. II. *His only Son*, p. 135, 137. edit. 4. ad marginem. Bp. Bull, Defensio Fid. Nic. c. 1.

contingencies, (that is, things to come, which depend on uncertain causes, and the actings of free agents, &c.) or in respect to other Articles of our Creed. We find in Scripture the doctrine of the resurrection of the body; by which we understand that our bodies, however decayed in the earth, shall be raised again, and united to our souls; but after what manner we understand not: all which yet we profess to believe. So that in respect to these matters, which are and will be mysteries, without further revelation, “ We believe as we conceive, not distinctly and particularly, but generally, as our ideas or conceptions are; and we must be content with such imperfect knowledge, and assent as far as our conceptions go; believing in part, what is revealed in part, or what we now only *see us through a glass darkly*, and can only *know in part*. But it is unreasonable to deny our assent to the truth of any thing, or the reality of its existence, only because the manner of its existing is unknown to us.” Lastly, Seeing the church of Christ in the next ages to the inspired writers, as well as for so many ages since, to this time, hath understood the Scriptures in the sense above mentioned, it is certainly our duty, and safest for us, to acquiesce therein; though we cannot account for the manner, in a point confessedly above our comprehension; adoring God for his unspeakable goodness, who *so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*.

Sixth remark. The reason why our Lord calls himself *the Son of man*, seems to be chiefly in reference to that famous prophecy⁴, which the Jews themselves understood concerning the Messiah and his kingdom: *I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days; and there was given him dominion, glory, and a kingdom.* Hence our Lord takes on him the same title, as being the true Messiah⁵, *The Son of man shall come in the glory of the Father; and*¹, *Then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power*

⁴ Mede, book iv. epistle xv. ¹ Cartwright. Mellific. Hebraic. Dan. vii. 13, 14.

⁵ Matt. xvi. 27.

¹ Luke xxi. 27.

and great glory. And^u, *As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man*^x. Hereby Christ declared, that how lowly soever he now appeared, and had not where to lay his head, yet he was the same which Daniel prophesied should one day appear so gloriously. The reason why in this prophecy Christ is called *the Son of man*, may be, because he was therein foretold to receive the kingdom, not barely as God, co-eternal with the Father, but as being the Messiah, who was to take upon him the nature of man.

The calling Ezekiel so often *Son of man*, was upon some other account, probably to keep him humble, and prevent his being too much exalted with the many heavenly visions which he saw.

Seventh remark. There was great reason why the Messiah or Saviour should be the Son of God, and also should take upon him the nature of man, *viz.* that the Divine justice might be satisfied, and honour vindicated; for though God designed man's redemption out of his love and goodness, yet it was requisite that consideration should be had to his honour and justice, which was done by the sufferings of Christ, being God as well as man; the excellency and dignity of his person raising the value and merit of his sufferings. Thus much plainly appears from Rom. iii. 24, 25, 26. *Being justified freely by his grace, (as to the motive of it,) through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, (as to the meritorious cause,) whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, that he might be just, (to do nothing inconsistent with his own divine justice,) in remitting sins past; inasmuch as Christ has made satisfaction for them, by his most precious blood. It is not for us to say, by what other method God might have been reconciled to us; we are to adore, and walk worthy of his abundant love, in sending his Son to be our Redeemer. Again, the honour of God was vindicated by the obedience of Christ, who fulfilled all righteousness; especially since he*

^u John v. 26, 27.

^x Compare Rev. xiv. 14.

suffered and performed the obedience in the same nature of man, which had by sin offended God's justice, and broken his laws^y.

Eighth remark. Christ, or the Messiah, as he was man, was to proceed out of the house of David: for God promised David, *Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever*^z. Accordingly Isaiah foretold, *Hear ye now, O house of David, &c. Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, &c.* God indeed bade Ahaz *ask a sign; but Ahaz said, I will not ask;* and then follows the promise, not to Ahaz alone, but *to the whole house of David*^a.

Here, by the way, we learn a proper answer to the objection of the Jews against this prophecy of the Messiah, which being uttered so many ages before Christ's birth, they think could not be a sign to Ahaz at that time: forasmuch as the promise of the Messiah was a security to *the house of David*, under that their present danger of an invasion by the kings of Syria and Samaria, that they should not be extinguished, but that the Messiah, of the seed of David, was one day to appear, and establish his throne.

Furthermore, Jeremiah prophesied, *Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch*^b. It is said, indeed, that some of the Herodians (a spawn of the Sadducees^c, who adhered to Herod the Great) pretended that Herod, (who was no Jew, much less of David's posterity,) whom the Romans had made king of the Jews, was the Messiah^d; and afterwards, Josephus would have Vespasian, the Roman emperor^e, to be the expected Prince, or Messiah. But as the Herodians pretended in flattery to Herod, so Josephus sought the favour of the Romans, and was kindly used by them, and he believed God had forsaken

^y This matter is thus explained by Irenæus, l. iii. c. 20. *Hæreere itaque fecit, et adunivit, quemadmodum prædiximus, hominem Deo. Si enim homo vicisset inimicum hominis, non juste victus esset inimicus: rursus autem, nisi Deus donasset salutem, non firmiter haberemus eam, &c. vid. (in not. Grabii ad loc.) textum Græc.*
^z 2 Sam. vii. 16. ^a Isa. vii. 10, &c. ^b Jer. xxiii. 5. ^c Ham. et Lightf. Hor. in Matt. xxii. 16. ^d Grot. et Ham. *ibid.* ^e Joseph. Wars, book vii. chap. 12.

his own countrymen the Jews; so that it is not strange he should interpret oracles in favour of Vespasian, then emperor of so great a part of the world, and conqueror of the Jewish nation. But the generality of the Jews always expected the Messiah to proceed from King David^f; and there was none so usual and proper a name, which their rabbies were wont to call him by, as Ben David, or the Son of David. Hence the blind men besought Christ, *Thou Son of David, have mercy on us*^e. And when the people saw the miracles that he wrought, they said, *Is not this the Son of David?* that is, the Messiah whom we expect^h. And therefore we are to suppose, that the Virgin Mary was of the family of David, as well as Joseph; that Christ might be raised from the *loins of David*ⁱ.

And thus much appears from the angel's words to her^k, *Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son.—He shall be great, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.* She therefore, who conceived this Son, must be of the house of David, since Joseph was only his supposed father. And otherwise she could not have gone to Bethlehem, the city of David, to be taxed or enrolled^l, but must have gone to another place; for it is said^m, that *all went to be taxed, every one to his own city*, that is, where their ancestors were born, that their names, family, dignity, and condition, might be recorded or registered.

Although the emperor hereby might design only to enquire into the strength and riches of his dominions; yet the admirable providence of God is here to be observed, in bringing it to pass, that this taxing or enrolment should be made at that very time, when the Virgin Mary was to be delivered; that she, living at Nazareth, might be obliged to go (above sixty miles) to Bethlehem, where Christ should be born, according as it was foretoldⁿ. This ancient prophecy, of the place of the birth of the Messiah, was so well understood in Christ's time, that when Herod demanded of the chief priests and scribes *where Christ should be born*, they readily answered, *in*

^f Lightf. Hor. in Matt. i. 1. ^g Matt. ix. 27. ^h Matt. xii. 23. ⁱ Acts ii. 30. ^k Luke i. 31, 32. ^l Luke ii. 5. ^m Verse 3. ⁿ Micah v. 2.

Bethlehem of Judea^o. But what then did the Jews mean, when they affirmed it as a common and undoubted maxim^p, *When Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is?* They did not dispute but that he should at first appear to come from Bethlehem; but they had a^q tradition that he should presently hide himself for a time, and then appear again, as from an unknown place^r. Another instance of the Divine Providence in the aforementioned taxing or enrolment, in respect to Christ, is, that the public records of that enrolment, which expressed the children as well as others, should give testimony both to the place of his birth and his family^s.

The Evangelists^t deduce the genealogy of Christ from Joseph, his reputed father, that so they might thereby shew that even in that respect he belonged to the tribe of Judah, and the family of David; otherwise the Jews might have objected against his pretences of being the Messiah, for they apprehended no other to be his father besides Joseph^u. Again, there is another reason why the genealogy of Christ should be deduced from Joseph, though he was only his reputed father; because of that rule among the Jews, *the family on the mother's side is not to be called a family*^x; for both these reasons, it was necessary to shew, that Joseph, the supposed father of Christ, was of the tribe of Judah, and of the family of David, from which tribe and family the Messiah was to come; the reason why Christ is said to be *the Son of David*, *the Son of Abraham*^y, that is, of their posterity, without mentioning any between them, is, because of God's particular covenant with, and promise to, these two, that the Messiah (*viz.* as man) should proceed from them^z, the mentioning this was most suitable to the notions of the Jews, and their expectancy of the Messiah, that he should come of the family of David, whose ancestor was Abraham.

^o Matt. ii. 4, 5. ^p John vii. 27. ^q Lightf. Hor. in Joh. vii. 27. ^r Hence Trypho the Jew argued, that if the Messiah was come, he was unknown, nay, that he did not know himself to be such an one, nor had any power till Elias came and anointed him, and made him manifest. J. Martyr, Dialog. cum Tryphone, edit. Jebb. p. 29. ^s Grot. in Luc. ii. 5. ^t Matt. i. 16. Luke iii. 23. ^u John vi. 42. ^x Lightf. Hor. in Matt. i. 16. ^y Matt. i. 1. ^z Gen. xxii. 18. compared with Acts iii. 25, 26. 2 Sam. vii. 16.

The difficulties ^a in reconciling the genealogy in Matt. i. with that in Luke iii. are not easy to be cleared at this distance of time, the tables of the Jewish pedigrees being lost so long ago. These general rules have been laid down; *viz.* first, that the Jews reckoned their genealogy not only by a natural, but legal descent, and that either by adoption, or marriage; so for instance, Jacob ^b might be the proper father of Joseph, and Eli ^c his father by the law. Secondly, They were also wont to call a person *the son* of such a one, though after a generation or two, and to reckon the grandson the son of the grandfather; as the posterity of Israel are often called his sons. However, the main design of the Evangelist is to be respected, *viz.* to shew, that Jesus is the Messiah, of the offspring of David, and of the posterity of Abraham. Matthew ended the genealogy with Abraham for the sake of the Jews, who knew the Messiah should be one of his posterity, according to God's covenant with him. Luke carried it up to Adam, (to whom the Messiah was promised, and called *the Seed of the woman*;) no doubt to comfort the Gentiles, with their interest in Christ; forasmuch as they are the posterity or sons of Adam, though not the proper posterity of Abraham.

Though Bethlehem was the city of the ancestors of Joseph and Mary, as hath been said, yet they, and Christ with them, till his manifestation, dwelt at Nazareth in Galilee, a very contemptible place, as were the inhabitants too; whence Nathanael demanded ^d, *Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?* Hence ^e Christ was called in contempt *a Nazarene*; and thereby very probably we are to understand ^f, *That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene*; not that any one prophet said those express words, but the sense; for they spake of Christ, as *despised and reproached* ^g.

^a The reader may see a large account of this in Bishop Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, part ii. chap. 6, &c. ^b Matt. i. 16. ^c Luke iii. 25. ^d John i. 46. ^e This interpretation may be learned from St. Chrysostom, ad 1 Cor. ii. 9. *που γιγασκται μη δια των ρηματων, αλλα των πραγματων*, &c. Though he assigns another on Matt. ii. *viz.* of the prophecy being lost; but then the Evangelist would scarcely have cited it. See Casaubon, exercit. 7. §. 2. ^f Matt. ii. 23. ^g Isa. liii. 3. Psalm lxxxix. 9, 10.

Ninth remark. Concerning the *dæmoniacs*, or the possessed with the devil, we are to understand, 1st, That it hath been acknowledged both by Jews and Gentiles^b, that the devils have often possessed the bodies of mankind, and have been cast out: but they seem to have had the greatest power about the time of our Saviour's appearance, which did the more manifest our Lord's divine authority in casting them out, and destroying that power of theirsⁱ. For the truth of which, the primitive Christians^k appealed to the Jews and Gentiles. 2dly, That the devils often afflicted men with diseases, which shewed the usual symptoms of those which are natural, either by altering the blood and spirits, or some other way occasioning such diseases: an instance we have in Job^l. This seems to be the case of the lunatic, who is said often to fall into the fire and water, and to foam like such as are afflicted with the falling sickness^m, which disease was brought upon him by the devil that possessed himⁿ; for it is said, *Jesus rebuked the devil, and he departed out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour*^o. Sometimes it seems, that the devil acted on the bodies of men, not after the usual manner of a natural disease, but in a more extraordinary way; so on that man *with an unclean spirit*^p, who brake in sunder even chains and fetters. Those two also^q were *possessed*, in an extraordinary manner, *with devils*, which besought Christ to suffer them to go into the herd of swine.

Tenth remark. Christ was to shew himself, in person only, in the country of the Jews, and to that people called *the lost*

^b The rabbies often mention the devils possessing and agitating persons, Lightf. Hor. in Matt. xvii. 15. and in Luc. xiii. 11. Compare Irenæus, edit. Grabe, Oxon. 1702. l. ii. c. 5. prope finem, p. 123. l. 23. et notas ibid. And the ancient Chaldeans had a notion, that the *dæmons*, insinuating themselves into the entrails, caused epilepsies and frenzy. Stanley's History of Philosophy, part xv. chap. 16. and Plutarch mentions advice given by the magi, to those who were possessed, (*δαίμονιζοµένους*), to repeat the Ephesian verses, Sympos. l. vii. qu. 5. prope finem. And, which is very considerable, the power of ejecting devils continued in the church in the second century, as appears from the fathers cited by Grotius in Marc. xvi. 17. ⁱ Matt. xii. 28, 29. ^k Just. Martyr. Trypho, ed. Jebb. p. 256. et Apolog. 2. §. 6. edit. Hutchin. Irenæus, ibid. aliique apud Grot. loco jam laudato. ^l Chap. ii. 6, 7. ^m Matt. xvii. Luke ix. ⁿ Matt. xvii. 18. ^o See also Luke ix. 39. and xiii. 16. ^p Mark v. ^q In Matt. viii. 28, &c.

sheep of the house of Israel^r, who were the posterity of Jacob, or Israel: but he was to be published to the rest of the world, called Gentiles, by his apostles afterwards; and therefore, in his first mission of his apostles, whilst himself was living, he charged them^s, *not to go into the way of the Gentiles*; but after his resurrection, he enlarged the commission, *Go teach all nations*^t.

Eleventh remark. Seeing Christ, according to the flesh, was of Jewish extraction, and lived and died in the country of the Jews; and seeing that people were generally his first converts and disciples, by whom the New Testament was written; it is necessary to observe the phrases, or forms of speaking, and allusions that we meet with therein; which related to the customs of the Jewish law; and some particular usages that were in our Saviour's time, which give light to divers passages in the holy Gospel. Such as,

First, The scribes and doctors, among the Jews, proudly affected to be saluted with peculiar titles of honour and respect^u, above all others; as *rabbi, my father, my master*. Again, these rabbies and scribes claimed^x an authority to be believed and followed in whatsoever they taught; as if their words were equal to the law of God; nay, in some respect, to be more regarded; for they taught, that *a prophet from God ought to shew a sign or a miracle, but their traditions ought to be received on their own words*. This explains Matt. xxiii. 8, 9, 10. where Christ forbids to be called *Rabbi, Father, or Master*; not that titles of honour and respect are inconsistent with the Gospel, (as some mistake the place,) for St. John styles the aged, *Fathers*^y; and St. Paul styles himself a *father* to the Corinthians^z, and orders that *the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour*^a: but, *1st,* That we should not, like the Scribes and Pharisees among the Jews, proudly *affect* such titles of honour. And, *2dly,* That although the governors of Christ's church on earth have such authority^b in matters of faith, as to take care the right

^r Matt. xv. 24.^s Matt. x. 5.^t Matt. xxviii. 19.^u Lightf. Hor. in

Matt. xxiii. 7.

^x Id. in Matt. xv. 2.^y 1 John ii. 13.^z 1 Cor. iv. 15.^a 1 Tim. v. 17.^b The 20th Article of the Church of England.

faith be preserved, and the mouths of those stopped, who would corrupt the same ^c, yet no man should challenge an absolute authority over the faith of men, so as to attribute unto earthly guides or *masters* (called also *fathers*) such infallibility as is due only to God, our Father in heaven; but that we adhere to the divine authority of the Scriptures, as the only infallible rule of faith and manners.

Secondly, The Jews esteemed the Gentiles so vile, that they accounted the very ground where they lived to be unclean; and therefore, when the Apostles, whom Christ sent to preach unto the Jews his kingdom, were rejected, he ordered them to *shake off the dust from their feet, as a testimony against them* ^a, thereby expressing, that they would be no more concerned with them, and so would not have so much as the very dust of their ground, on which they trod, to cleave unto their feet; but that for the future they would esteem them as a heathen people, and such to whom God's covenant did not belong; for it was a doctrine taught amongst them, that the very dust ^e of the ground of the Gentiles and heathen would pollute them. So that they took care how they carried away pot-herbs from any ground of a Gentile, lest some of the mould should be carried away with them, and defile the pure Israelites: by this action, the apostles were to testify against them, that they looked on them as no better than Gentiles, for refusing Christ and his doctrine.

Thirdly, In Christ's time, the Jews had their stated forms ^f of prayer, in number eighteen; by which they were every day to pray to, and praise God; and because all could not so easily repeat so many, when at home, their doctors reduced the substance of them to a short compendium. In their synagogues, the *cazan* ^g, or reader, repeats or sings the prayers very loud; with whom the rest join in a lower tone, especially those eighteen before mentioned, with others intermixed, which make up their liturgy, or public service.

^c 1 Tim. i. 3. Tit. iii. 10. ^d Matt. x. 14. Luke ix. 5. ^e Lightf. Hor. in Matt. x. 14. ^f Buxtorf. Synag. c. x. p. 207. Lightf. Hor. in Matt. vi. 9, &c. Leo Modena, pars i. cap. 10, 11. Prideaux's Connect. part i. b. vi. sub anno 444. ^g Leo Modena, *ibid.*

Furthermore, besides these set forms for general use, the Jewish doctors were wont to compose other ^h peculiar forms, which they taught their respective scholars, *as John taught his disciples*ⁱ, and which were more peculiarly adapted to their occasions and conditions. After the same manner ^k, Christ prescribed a set form of prayer and praise, (which is therefore called *the Lord's Prayer*;) upon the request of his disciples, that he would teach them to pray, *as John taught his disciples*; which prayer of Christ is composed in the plural number, in compliance, no doubt, with that ^l rule of the Jewish church, which obliged him that prayed, although he were alone, to associate himself with the church, that is, to reckon himself a fellow-member of the church; and so to pray for others, as well as himself. Hence Christ hath taught us to pray, not *My*, but *Our* Father, which art in heaven, &c. It is also observed, that this our Lord's Prayer^m is for the most part composed out of the old Jewish forms above mentioned, (it being the custom of our Saviour to conform to the lawful and decent usages of the Jews in his time, both in civil and religious matters.)

Fourthly, When the Jews received proselytes, that is, persons that came over to their religion, they wereⁿ wont not only to circumcise, but also to sanctify or cleanse them by water, or baptize them; of which their doctors ascribe the original to Jacob's injunction to his household, that they should *put away the strange gods that were among them, and be clean, and change their garments*^o; and to Moses's command on mount Sinai, that they should *wash their clothes*^p. Hence John the Baptist in this manner received those that came to him, as new proselytes, repenting and forsaking their sins, and thereby being qualified for the kingdom of the Messiah, by baptizing them, and so preparing them for his coming^q, which rite afterwards our Lord instituted for the sacrament of admission into his church^r, and to seal to the members thereof the remission of their sins^s, the

^h Lightf. Hor. in Matt. vi. 9. ⁱ Luke xi. ^k Matt. vi. and Luke xvii.

^l Ibid. ^m Idem ibid. ver. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. ⁿ Lightf. Hor. in Matt. iii. 6.

^o Gen. xxxv. 2. ^p Exod. xix. 10. ^q Matt. iii. ^r Matt. xxviii. 19. ^s Acts xxii. 16.

grace of the Holy Spirit[†], and eternal salvation[‡]. So that John's baptism was (in compliance with the usages of the Jews) only preparatory to our Lord's, who was to *come after* him, and to appoint such a baptism, that was to entitle them to the spiritual gifts, and to grace and salvation. Since water hath so naturally a property of cleansing, it is very plain and easy to apprehend it as a representation of the purifying of the soul: hence, besides the Jews, the ^vheathens had their lustrations or washing with water, for purifying themselves. Furthermore, as a proselyte of the Jews, being baptized, was esteemed by them to become a *new-born child*, and to have cast off his old relations[×]; so the Christian proselyte, being baptized, is said to be as one *born again*, to have *put off the old man*, and become a *new creature*.

The form of baptizing, at first, was by *going into* the water, or being dipped or plunged therein[‡], which was not inconvenient in the east, where the climate is warmer, and multitudes daily bathe in the rivers; but in our colder climates, a pouring on or sprinkling of water is most common. Sprinkling, or pouring on, in the Scripture, hath the term of baptizing given to it[‡]; *the washing* (or, as in the original, *baptizing*[‡]) of tables or beds whereupon they leaned when they eat, that is, pouring water upon them, or sprinkling them with water, if any legally unclean person had touched them; and St. Paul interprets baptizing, by *cleansing with the washing of water*^b. The grace of God is not confined to the quantity of the water; but as a spoonful of wine in the other sacrament is as significant of Christ's blood as a whole cup; so sprinkling or pouring on is an application of water to the person baptized, as well as plunging him in a river; and sprinkling or pouring on is *baptizing* in the Scripture use of the term, though not after the manner of the eastern countries; and although the ancient Christians generally baptized by immersion, or dipping, yet in some cases they allowed sprinkling, as in case of sickness, and danger of life,

[†] Matt. iii. 11. [‡] Mark xvi. 16. ^v Dr. Spencer de Leg. Hebr. l. iii. dissert. 3.

[×] Lightf. in Joh. iii. 3. [‡] Matt. iii. 6, 16. Acts viii. 38. ^z Mark vii. 4.

^z βαπτισμοῦ — κλινῶν.

^b Eph. v. 26.

or when persons were under confinement, &c.^c whereby it appears, that they did not understand being dipped or plunged in water so absolutely necessary, but that for proper causes, pouring on of water, or sprinkling, was sufficient.

Fifthly, It was familiar with the people of the eastern countries, and the Jewish doctors in particular, to use divers *common sayings*, or *proverbs*; for example, they expressed the doctrine of wisdom and instruction by the metaphor^d of meat and drink; and the receiving or entertaining such doctrine by eating and drinking: thus^e, *Wisdom crieth in the streets, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine that I have mingled*; that is, hearken to wisdom and instruction. Hence our Saviour exhorts^f, *Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth to everlasting life*, that is, by faith in Christ, and embracing his doctrine, to gain eternal life. Thus also they would signify a small quantity of any thing, by likening^g it to a *grain of mustard seed*, which was noted to be the smallest seed in Judea, that produced so great a plant; for though it does not so with us, yet in the hotter climates, and particularly with them, it produced^h great and high branches, like a tree; and therefore our Saviour spoke according to the common usage of the country, whenⁱ he compared the small beginning, but future increase, of the Gospel to a *grain of mustard seed, which indeed is the least of all seeds, but when it is grown, it becometh a tree*. So also in the southern parts of America, there are mustard trees “higher than a man on horseback, and the birds build their nests on them^k.” Again, the word *paradise* signifies properly a garden, or delightful walks, and particularly the garden of Eden, where God placed our first parents before their fall. Hence it was used by the Jews (since the time of Esdras especially) for the happy and comfortable station of pious souls departed this life, till the resurrection^l. In which sense, Christ promised the penitent thief^m, *This day shalt thou be*

^c Cyprian. epist. 69. edit. Oxon. ad Magnum.

^d Grot. in Matt. xxvi. 26.

^e Prov. ix. 5.

^f John vi. 27.

^g Lightf. Hor. in Matt. xiii. 22.

^h Ibid.

ⁱ Matt. xiii. 31, 32.

^k Woods Rogers's Cruising Voyage, p. 343.

^l Lightf.

in Luc. xxiii. 43.

^m Luke xxiii. 43.

with me in paradise; which no question the thief understood according to the common notion among the Jews; that is, not only to be remembered by Christ when he came into *his kingdom*, as he prayed to be, and to be happy with him for ever, both in soul and body after the resurrection; but in the mean time, to be in that happy state in respect to the soul, which the Jews commonly prayed for, when their friends were dying, *Let his soul be in paradise, or with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*. Hence the primitive Christians had the same opinion of paradise; and it is to be observed, that our Lord did not promise the penitent thief that he should that day be with him in his *kingdom*; for Christ was to ascend thither after his resurrection, and make way for all his servants to enter, in the same method in which he went before; but *the crown of righteousness*, the perfect consummation and bliss, is to be expected, when Christ shall invite at the great day, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom*ⁿ. Again, when the Jews would signify any thing unusual or difficult, they would say^o, “An elephant goes through a needle’s eye;” which our Lord alludes to Matthew xix. 24.

Sixthly, Among the Jews, the man was wont to be *espoused*^p, or betrothed to his wife, some considerable time before he married her; during which time he might visit, but not lie with her^q. This explains Matt. i. 18. *Mary was espoused to Joseph before they came together*.

Seventhly, The Jews, in celebrating the great feast of the passover, were wont to use some particular sacramental phrases; which both clear our Saviour’s intention in instituting the Lord’s supper, and explain to us the sense of some expressions relating to it; for instance, as the lamb is termed in Scripture the Lord’s passover, though it was only the memorial of it^r, so they were wont^s to call the lamb then eaten, *The body of the lamb*; and to say of the unleavened bread, *This is the bread of affliction which our fathers did eat in*

ⁿ Grot. in Luc. xxiii. 43. Bishop Taylor, Great Exemplar, part iii. ad §. 16. num. 1.

^o Lightf. in Matt. xix. 24.

^p Lightf. Hor. in Matt. i. 18. Leo

Modena, part iv. c. 3.

^q See Dent. xx. 7.

^r Exod. xii. 11.

^s Ham. in

Matt. xxvi. 26.

Egypt; that is, a commemoration, or representation of it. Thus Christ says of the bread blessed and broken, and of the cup, *This is my body, This is my blood*; that is, to commemorate and represent his body broken and wounded, and blood shed; that by duly receiving it, we may both make a thankful memorial and representation of his death and sufferings, and also be made partakers of the benefits thereof. Again, as the Jewish passover was a feast upon the sacrifice of a lamb, for a thankful remembrance of their deliverance out of Egypt^u, so is the Lord's supper a feast, upon the *memorial of the sacrifice* of Christ's body broken, and blood shed, for a thankful remembrance of *Christ our passover's being sacrificed for us*, in order to our deliverance from sin, death, and hell. Hence it is, that as the eucharist, or Lord's supper, is a commemorative sacrifice, so the Jewish term *altar* is applied to the Lord's table^x. Further, when the unleavened bread was set on the table, the master of the house blessed God, *for having created the fruits of the earth*^y: so Christ took bread, and *blessed it, or gave thanks* for it to God^z. And as the master of the house *blessed God for the fruit of the vine*, when they drank of the wine, (thence termed by them the cup of blessing^a,) so is *the cup which we drink*, called by the Apostle, *the cup of blessing*^b. And, lastly, as the Jews *sung an hymn of praise to God*, at their passover supper, *for his stupendous wonders*^c, so Christ, with his apostles, *sung an hymn* at the conclusion of his supper.

There is a seeming difference in the relation given by the Evangelists of the passover, which Christ and the Jews eat that year in which he suffered. St. Matthew says^d, that Christ did eat the passover the *evening* before his death; and yet St. John^e tells us, that early the next morning, *the Jews went not into the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the passover*. Of this there are two accounts given; the one, that by *the passover* in John is meant, not the paschal lamb, but the *sheep and oxen* eaten all the

^u Exod. xii. ^x Heb. xiii. 10. ^y Buxtorf. Synag. c. xviii. Lightf. Hor. in
 Matt. xxvi. 26. ^z Luke xxii. 17. ^a Lightf. and Ham. on 1 Cor. x. 16.
^b 1 Cor. x. 16. ^c Buxtorf. *ibid.* ^d Chap. xxvi. 20. ^e Chap. xviii. 28.

seven days of unleavened bread^f, which was called strictly the *chagigah*, but in a general sense the *passover*, as making one part of the solemnity^g. The other account is, that Christ, the evening before his death, kept the passover in such manner, as the circumstances of his approaching death would allow; that is, by eating only the *unleavened bread, and bitter herbs*, (a part of the passover feast,) as it was usual for them to keep the passover at home, who could not go to Jerusalem^h. The former account is by many esteemed the most probable; because, when the disciples are said by St. Matthew to make provision to keep, and *to eat the passover*ⁱ, it should seem that Christ, who on all occasions exactly observed the law, did keep and eat it as it ought to be kept and eaten, and at the usual time, as one of the ancients observes^k; which St. Mark confirms, when he says^l, that when his disciples asked him, *Where wilt thou that we go and prepare, that thou mayest eat the passover*, it was *the first day of unleavened bread, at evening, when they* (the Jews, according to custom) *killed the passover*; and the *guest chamber furnished* at that time, and *the hour being come*^m, import the same; and that this was on Thursday evening, St. Paul assures, when he affirms, that Christ instituted the Lord's supper *the same night in which he was betrayed*ⁿ, which is allowed to be at the same time when he eat the passover. What St. John says^o of the day when Christ suffered, *it was the preparation of the passover*, is understood to import only the passover Friday, or the Friday in the paschal festival, that is, the day before the paschal sabbath^p.

Eighthly, The Jews, in reckoning their hours, divided the whole time from the sun-rising to the setting into twelve equal parts^q, beginning their account from sun-rising. So that

^f Deut. xvi. 2. and 2 Chron. xxxv. 7, 8. ^g For which consult Lightf. Hor. in Joh. xviii. 28. and Dr. Whitby's Appendix to the Gospel of St. Mark. ^h See

Ham. in Mark xiv. 12. and Dr. Wells on Matt. xxvi. 20. ⁱ Chap. xxvi. 17, &c.

^k Chrysost. in Joh. xviii. 28. ^l Chap. xiv. 12. ^m Luke xxii. 11, 14.

ⁿ 1 Cor. xi. 23. ^o John xix. 14. ^p As Mark xv. 42. the *παρασκευη* is the

παρασκευασιον. See Dr. Whitby in loc. ^q Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. cap. 13. ad initium.

when the sun was in the equinox, and the days and nights of equal length, then their hours of day and night were equal too; and their first hour of the day was our sixth to the seventh in the morning, their second hour was our eighth, and so on; their sixth hour was our twelfth at noon, and their twelfth hour was our sixth at night; but when the days were longer or shorter, then their hours proportionably took up more or less time; still they divided the day, or time the sun was up, how long or short soever, into twelve equal parts: hence^r, *Are there not twelve hours in the day?* so that^s the *eleventh hour* was the last hour of the day, save one. In such manner they reckoned the night, or time between sun-setting and the next rising; so that the third hour of the night^t might be our nine at night, their sixth hour of the night at midnight, and so on.

They had also three other noted times in the day of going to the temple to prayer^u, *viz.* the third, the sixth, and ninth hours; the first and last were the times of offering the daily burnt-offering^x, *viz.* at our nine in the morning, and three in the afternoon. Each of these stated times contained the space of three hours; and that whole space was called by the name of the hour on which it began: as from the third hour of the day to the sixth, was the third hour of prayer, because it began at the third hour, or our nine in the morning; so from the sixth hour of the day to the ninth was the sixth hour of prayer; and from the ninth hour to their twelfth was the ninth hour of prayer; as in the following table.

The upper line is our account, the lower is the Jewish.

7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Third hour of prayer.			Sixth hour of prayer.			Ninth hour of prayer.					

There was also among the Jews another reckoning of their time, proper to be taken notice of, which is, that the natural

^r John xi. 9. ^s Matt. xx. 9, 12. ^t Acts xxiii. 23. ^u Grot. in Matt. xxvii. 45. Ham. in Joh. xix. 6. and Luke ii. 8. Dr. Whitby in Acts iii. 1.
^x Exod. xxix. 39.

day, consisting^y of one night and day^z, began with them at evening; so^a *the evening and the morning were the first day*, the evening being set before the morning, because darkness was in time before the light^b; accordingly they^c still begin their sabbath on Friday evening; the reason is, because they use the lunar year; and the new moon cannot be discerned but at that time. Now as other people, so the Jews were wont to express one whole thing by a part of it, by a figure frequently in use; and therefore any part of the natural day (consisting of one night and day) may express the whole. This explains the account given of the time of our Saviour's resurrection^d, that he was *three days and three nights in the heart of the earth*: now he was buried on Friday, and arose on Sunday morning, and so being in the grave one part of the first natural day, or evening and morning, which began on Thursday night, and ended with Friday evening, that is here meant for one night and day; the second is Friday night and Saturday; the third is Saturday night and Sunday; on the morning whereof he arose. By the same way of including the first and last day, we may reconcile Christ's bringing the three disciples up to the mount *after six days*^e, with his doing it *about eight days after*^f. For Matthew computed only the six days between the discourse of Christ^g, and his ascent up to the mount; whereas Luke included both that day of Christ's discourse and his ascension; and so they were in all about eight days. Lastly, We read of twofold weeks among the Jews; the one was ordinary, consisting of seven days; the other extraordinary, or prophetic, consisting of seven years; so^h *Daniel's seventy weeks* are seventy times seven yearsⁱ.

Ninthly, The Jews were wont to express themselves by signs and actions, as well as words, (as hath been observed at the end of the first general rule for interpreting the holy Scriptures^k;) and particularly when their minds were dis-

^y Νύχθήμερον, Grot. and Ham. in Matt. xii. 40. ^z As 2 Cor. xi. 25. ^a Gen. i.
^b Ainsworth in loc. ^c Leo Modena, part iii. c. 1. and Mr. Ockley's notes thereon.
^d Matt. xii. 40. ^e Matt. xvii. 1. ^f Luke ix. 28. ^g Chap. xvi. at the end.
^h Dan. ix. 24. ⁱ See also Lev. xxv. 8. ^k Numb. xxvii.

turbed, they were wont to express it by tearing some part of their garments; which action, though it may seem strange to us, was yet as usual among them as any other particular custom is among us; and so it was with some other of the eastern people, particularly the Persians^k. Thus when Jacob apprehended his son Joseph to be torn in pieces, he *rent his clothes*^l; and therefore we find the high-priest to rend his clothes, when he thought Christ had blasphemed, in affirming himself to be the Son of God, and that he should come hereafter in the clouds of heaven^m.

Tenthly, It was customaryⁿ with the Jews to be called by a Jewish name among their own countrymen, and by another among the Gentiles. Hence we find Thomas called Didymus^o, and Tabitha called Dorcas^p, and Saul had the Roman name of Paul.

Eleventhly, The eastern people (of whom the Jews were a part) were accustomed to carry presents^q to the king, or any person of honour and authority, at the same time that they visited him, or requested a favour; that being esteemed an expression of respect, and accounted due on such occasions. Thus Jacob instructs his sons to carry a present to Joseph, when they went to buy food of him in Egypt^r. Hence it was that the magi, or wise men from the east, brought their presents of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, when they visited Christ the Messiah, or King of the Jews^s.

Twelfthly, The disciples or scholars among the Jews were wont to sit at the feet of their teachers^t, while they were instructed in the laws and exercise of their religion; and it was a common saying among them, that a diligent scholar or hearer must be *strewed with the dust of his master's feet*. Hence we find the man, out of whom Christ had cast the devils which had possessed him, being now in his right mind,

^k Grot. in Matt. xxvi. 65.

^l Gen. xxxvii. 34. See also Gen. xlv. 13.

^m Matt. xxvi. 65. ⁿ Lightf. Hor. in 1 Cor. i. 1. ^o John xi. 16. ^p Acts ix. 36.

^q See the Appendix, numb. 6. ^r Gen. xliii. 11. See also Gen. xxxii. 13. 1 Kings

x. 2. 2 Kings v. 5. ^s Matt. ii. 11. ^t Grot. in Luc. x. 39. Maimon, de studio

legis, cap. 3. §. 7. edit. Oxon. Verba legis reperiuntur inter humiles, qui se pulvere pedum sapientum conspergunt.

sitting at the feet of Jesus, as being attentive to his doctrine^u. And in this respect, Mary is said to *sit at Jesus' feet, and hear his word*^x; and Paul was *brought up at the feet of Gamaliel*, and taught the law^y.

Thirteenthly, The Jews, especially the richer sort, used to hire persons to make lamentations, at the death and funerals of their friends or relations; and that not only in voice, but by musical instruments^z. Hence^a *the minstrels*, &c. at the death of the ruler's daughter.

They also buried their dead (according to the manner used in the eastern countries to this day^b) most commonly not in the earth, but in tombs or caves, and vaults, hewn out of the rocks^c. Abraham is said to bury Sarah his wife in the cave of Macpelah^d. In such a sepulchre Lazarus and Christ's bodies were laid^e.

Fourteenthly, God, having adopted the Israelites for his peculiar people, was pleased to declare himself in a more especial manner their *Father*^f. Accordingly, in our Saviour's time, the Jews were wont to call upon God as their *Father in heaven*^g. In the same manner, Christ, who used to comply with the common language of the country, taught his disciples, being Jews, to pray, *Our Father, which art in heaven*. The Jews were wont to magnify themselves, especially on this account, that they, of all other people, were the sons of God^h. But now, under the Gospel, the Christians of all nations are through Christ the children of God by adoption; and therefore St. John declares, that *as many as received him, to them gave he power, or privilege, or dignity, to become the sons of God*ⁱ; and adds^k, *which are born not of blood, or of the posterity of Abraham, but of God*. And hence Christ hath taught us also to cherish our hopes in God, by calling on him in our prayers, as *our Father*; for though we are not of

^u Luke viii. 35. ^x Luke x. 39. ^y Acts xxii. 3. ^z Lightf. Hor. in Matt. ix. 23. ^a Matt. ix. 23. ^b Vide Appendix, numb. 2. ^c Lightf. Centur. Chorograph. 100. ante Hor. in Matt. and see the Appendix, numb. 2. ^d Gen. xxiii. 19. ^e Compare Bishop Pearson on the 4th Article, *and buried*, p. 221. John xi. 38. Matt. xxvii. 60. ^f Exod. iv. 22. Deut. xxxii. 6. ^g Lightf. Hor. in Matt. vi. 9. ^h See Isaiah lxiii. 16. ⁱ John i. 12. ^k Ver. 13.

Abraham's seed, yet through Christ we are the *adopted* children of God^l.

Adoption is a term taken from the civil law, and signifies a person's taking the child of another for his own, to make him his heir: this being applied unto God, is a favour vouchsafed to the members of Christ's church, to be accounted the children of God through grace, which by nature were the children of (or subject to) wrath. Here also it may be further remarked, that as the ancient church of the Jews (or the body of that people) were styled the sons or children, so also the chosen or elect of God^m; *Because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose, or elected, their seed after them*, that is, their whole seed, or the whole nation of the Jewsⁿ. Accordingly, the word *elected*, or *chosen*, in the New Testament, often signifies not any particular persons, (as some have mistaken it,) but the whole body or church of true Christians: thus^o, *they shall deceive the very elect*, or true Christians; and^p, *ye are a chosen, or elect, generation*^q.

Fifteenthly, Among the many traditions of the Jews, one was concerning^r the vow of prohibition or interdict; as if a man having rashly vowed not to do such a thing for another, he was bound by that vow, however the laws of God command him to do it. Hence, if a son, out of rashness or covetousness, vowed, that whatever part of his substance his parent might stand in need of should be as a *gift* to God, that is, *Corban*^s, (which signifies a thing consecrated to God, and not to be employed in common uses,) their tradition was, that a son, having so vowed, might refuse to succour his indigent parents, lest he should become guilty of the violation of his vow. Hence our Saviour accuses them^t, *Ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, and honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free: thus ye have made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.*

Sixteenthly, It was customary over the eastern parts, and so

^l Gal. iv. 4, 5. Eph. i. 5. ^m Deut. iv. 37. ⁿ So Deut. vii. 6, 7. ^o Matt. xxiv. 24. ^p 1 Pet. ii. 9. ^q See Dr. Whitby in 1 Pet. ii. 9. ^r Grot. Ham. and Lightf. in Matt. xv. 5. ^s Mark vii. 11. ^t Matt. xv. 5, 6.

among the Jews, for servants to wash their masters' feet after returning from abroad, to cleanse them from filth, (as it was anciently^a), because in those hot countries they frequently walked with sandals, (which were soles tied on to their feet,) and sometimes with naked feet. This custom we read of in the times of Christ^x. And this office of washing their feet, Christ did for his disciples, as a servant, to teach them humility^y. Hence St. Paul reckons it as an instance of piety, *to wash the saints' feet*^z. The same usage still continues in the east; for when pilgrims^a arrive at Jerusalem, they are received with this kindness of washing their feet.

Eleventh remark. For the understanding of the parables, observe, 1st, That the way in which the Jewish rabbies and doctors instructed their scholars^b, according to the custom of the eastern countries, (observed by one of the ancients who lived therein^c), was frequently by stories and parables; which set forth spiritual things under certain representations or similitudes taken from affairs and customs in the world. Thus, for example^d, one of the rabbies encourages a diligence in God's servants: "This matter (says he) is like unto a king, who invited his servants, but did not appoint the time. Those of them that were wise adorned themselves, and sat at the gate of the palace, to be ready; but the foolish went to their business. The king on a sudden enquires for his servants; the wise entered with their ornaments on, the other in a mean and indecent dress: the king rejoiced in the wise, but was enraged against the foolish."

Another of the rabbies^e teaches humility, by the following parable; "Three men (says he) were bidden to a feast; a prince, a wise man, and an humble man. The prince sat highest, next him the wise man, and the humble man lowest. The king observed it, and asked the prince, Why sittest thou highest? He said, Because I am a prince. Then he said to

^u Gen. xviii. 4. 1 Sam. xxv. 41. ^x Luke vii. 38. Lightf. Hor. in Joh. xiii. 5.
^y John xiii. 5. ^z 1 Tim. v. 10. ^a Thevenot. Trav. part i. chap. 36. ^b Grot.
 et Lightf. Hor. in Matt. xiii. 3. ^c Familiare est Syris, et maxime Palestinis,
 ad omnem sermonem suum parabolas jungere. Hieronym. in Matt. xviii. 23.
^d Lightf. Hor. in Matt. xxv. 2. ^e Lightfoot's Harmony, Ann. 33. p. 49.

the wise man, Why sittest thou next? He said, Because I am a wise man. And to the humble man, Why sittest thou lowest? Because I am humble. The king seated the humble man highest, and the wise man still in his place, and the prince lowest."

After this manner, the Jewish doctors used to instruct their people, who had a kind of natural genius to that sort of discoursing. Hence our Lord complied with the customs of the Jews, and spake so many parables, which tended much to edification, of the Jews especially, who were accustomed to that method; for thereby the thing was shewed as it were in an image or picture; and the story delighted the hearer, and so the more engaged attention, and fixed the instruction: also a reproof found an easier entrance this way, than when offered in downright terms^f.

Secondly, Notwithstanding parables were thus suitable to the custom and temper of the Jews; yet Christ gives another reason for his speaking by parables to some of the people^g, because to them it was *not given*, or allowed, *to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven*; or^h, *that seeing they may see, and not perceive*. Not that they were unavoidably deprived of the means of conviction; for, first, most of his parables were intelligible enough to the well-disposed and attentive among them; of whom many became his disciples: but as for those that were *without*ⁱ, no better prepared to receive the truth than heathen persons, their own wickedness and perverseness was the cause of their not understanding them^k, because *they had not*, that is, were not disposed to improve the knowledge they had enjoyed; and *they seeing, see not*^l, that is, wilfully shut their eyes against the light. Secondly, The doctrine which Christ taught concerning *faith* and *manners* is very plain and evident; and if some of the parables were obscure, they are those which^m contain *the mysteries of the king-*

^f Thus Nathan reproved David, 2 Sam. xii. 1, &c. See also the parable of Jehoshaphat, king of Israel, 2 Kings xiv. 9. and of the vineyard, Isaiah v. 1, &c. ^g Matt. xiii. 11. ^h As in Mark iv. 12. ⁱ Mark iv. 11. ^k As it is more fully explained in Matt. xiii. 12. ^l Matt. xiii. 13. ^m Grot. in Matt. xiii. 10.

*dom of heaven*ⁿ, which they might have asked him the interpretation of, (as his disciples did, and as scholars and hearers were wont to do.) These mysteries concerned the divine dispensation under the state of the Gospel, and the event of the institution, both among Jews and Gentiles; which Christ thought not fit more plainly to shew those, who were of such an obstinate and perverse temper, and came not with a sincere design to improve themselves; but discovered those mysteries to the apostles, as he did^o in the parable of the sower, shewing the effect which the preaching of the Gospel would have according to men's dispositions. So the wonderful progress of the Gospel, from so small a beginning, is signified^p by the strange growth of a small mustard seed, in the country of the Jews^q, above all other like sort of seeds. Again, the powerful influence of the Gospel on the hearts of men throughout the world is set forth, by the working and dispersing of a little leaven over the whole lump of meal^r.

Thirdly, The parables are to be understood as to the main design or scope^s of them, other circumstances being added to fill up the story; as the unjust steward^t is propounded to us for an example, not in the unjust part of cheating his lord, for that is only the filling up the story, but in using what of the world is now in our hands with prudence for our future advantage; as that steward was cunning in making friends of his lord's creditors, by lessening their debts, and thereby provided for himself, that when he was dismissed, they might receive him into their houses; so we should contrive to make our worldly treasures subservient to our future benefit, by disposing a part of them charitably, thereby laying up beforehand a treasure in heaven. So again^u, Christ is compared to a thief, not in respect of theft, but the sudden surprise.

Fourthly, As for the expression at the beginning of most of

ⁿ Matt. xiii. 11. ^o Ver. 18. ^p Ver. 31. ^q See the tenth remark on the Gospels above, numb. 5. ^r Ver. 33. ^s Maimon. in Præfat. ad Mor. Nevoch. Sensus interiorem parabolæ, sub literæ externæ cortice latentem assimilent [sapientes] margaritæ pretiosæ, &c. et paulo post, Ubi tota parabola rem significatam totam exhibet, multa quidem habentur verba, sed non singula pondus habent, verunt inserviunt tantum ad elegantiam, &c. ^t Luke xvi. ^u Luke xii. 39.

the parables, *The kingdom of heaven is like, &c.* Here *the kingdom of heaven* signifies sometimes the Gospel of the kingdom, or the state of the Gospel, or the manifestation of the Messiah, and the success thereof; and sometimes God's dealing with men under the Gospel state; as^x, *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind*; that is, in the Gospel state, and at the publishing Christ the Messiah, many, both good and bad, pretend to be his disciples and followers, and are outward members of the visible church of Christ; but at the judgment-day they shall be distinguished. Again^y, *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, who would take account of his servants*; that is, God's dealing with man according to the covenant of the Gospel, is resembled to a king calling his servants to account.

Fifthly, Some parables are to be understood, not as having respect primarily to the case of particular Christians, but the calling of the Gentiles in general, and the rejection of the Jews; as^z the parable of the householder, that went out at the ninth and eleventh hour, or the latter end of the day, to hire labourers into his vineyard, seems chiefly to signify the calling of the Gentiles in the latter age of the world; and the complaint of those who were first hired, for being made but equal to them who were called afterwards, seems to point out the Jews being offended at their equality with the Gentiles in the dispensation of the Gospel. In like manner, the parable of the two sons^a may denote the state of Jews and Gentiles; the latter of which, although, like the prodigal son, they had cast off the true religion, and run into wickedness, if, upon the preaching of the Gospel, they repent and believe in Christ, even they shall be kindly received into the church, as well as the elder brother the Jew. And^b, the parable of the unthankful husbandmen, to whom a vineyard was let out, and who slew the householder's servants and his son, for which they were destroyed, shewed God's judgments on the Jews, who resisted and persecuted the old prophets, and even Christ the Son of God himself, that they should be cast off, and the kingdom of God

^x Matt. xiii. 47.

^y Matt. xviii. 23.

^z Matt. xx. 1.

^a Luke xv.

^b Matt. xxi. 33.

given to another nation, *viz.* the Gentiles^c. So^d the parable of the persons invited to the marriage feast, who would not come, no doubt signified the Jews refusing the terms of the Gospel, and their rejection; and the inviting those on the *highways*, imported the calling of the Gentiles; though in a secondary sense, these parables may be applied to particular cases and persons; as the rewards allowed to that person who came into the vineyard late, may comfort such to whom the Gospel was only revealed in their old age, and as soon as they are *hired*, or have the knowledge of the Gospel, *labour* in the vineyard, discharge their Christian duties: so the prodigal son's penitence and return, being accepted, may encourage the timely and true penitent.

Twelfth remark. As for the *miracles* wrought by Christ; since no authority, inferior to that which formerly established the law, could be capable of repealing it^e, it was necessary that he should work miracles, who came to take down that way of worship, which had been at first settled by a power of miracles in Moses, that God might not be wanting to the faith of that people, who had received their law by signs and wonders from heaven; but that there should be as strong an evidence given to them, that the fulness of time was come, when that dispensation was to have an end, and to give place to another more perfect, which was to be established instead of it. We plainly find our Saviour very often appealing to his miracles, as the evidence of his divine commission^f; *If I had not done the works among them which no man else did, they had not had sin; that is, in not believing him.* Whereby Christ both sets forth the necessity of his working miracles, in order to the conviction of the world, and the greatness of the miracles which he wrought. He did those which no man else had done, no not Moses, or Elias, in curing all manner of diseases, by the word of his mouth. Again, the power of miracles did evidently declare that Christ was the promised Messiah, in whom the prophecies, concerning the miracles which the Messiah should work, were exactly fulfilled; as that of Isaiah xxxv. 5, 6.

^c Matt. xxi. 43. ^d Matt. xxii. 1. ^e See Bishop Stillingfleet's Orig. Sacr. l. ii. c. ix. §. 2, 3. ^f John xv. 24.

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped: then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing; and therefore it is observable, that of John the Baptist it is said, that he wrought no miracles^h; God reserving the glory of miracles wholly to the name of Christ, that the evidence of his being the Messiah might be made more clear, by the miracles which he wrought; and that the minds of people might not be distracted between John and Christ. It may here be further remarked, concerning the miracles wrought by Christ, that there appears a difference between them, and those wrought by Moses; which last were, for the most part, of short continuance, and of a horrible effect; as the plagues in Egypt, and the punishment of those who murmured in the desert: whereas the miracles Christ wrought had a lasting effect, and were beneficial to men; as in curing their diseases and infirmities.

After what hath been remarked concerning the necessity of Christ's miracles, it should be enquired why he so often gave charge to *conceal* his miraclesⁱ: *he strictly charged* the blind men, whose eyes he had opened, *See that no man know it^k*. This seems to be done not only to avoid vain-glory, but, 1st, he knew the malice of the Scribes and Pharisees, with the other rulers of the Jews; and that they would make an ill use of the accounts told them of his miraculous works, and be the more incensed against him, and seek the sooner to destroy him, (as we find they did upon their own seeing him heal the man with the withered hand^l;) but *his time* was not then come, and therefore he would have his miracles concealed from them. 2dly, Another reason might be, to prevent the Jews from making insurrections, on pretence of his being a *temporal king*; for as such they expected their Messiah should appear, as it hath been observed before; but his *kingdom was not of this world*; and therefore, although he did enough to prove himself the Messiah, yet he would not have the effects of his mighty power so blazoned abroad, as to indulge the people in

^h John x. 41.

ⁱ Matt. ix. 30.

^k So Matt. xii. 16. and in other places.

^l Mark iii. 6.

their conceit of his being such a temporal Messiah and King as they expected: thus, when *they would take him by force, and make him a king*, upon his feeding five thousand with five loaves and two fishes, he withdrew himself from them, and *departed into a mountain himself alone*^m. For the same cause, he might charge his disciples, to *tell no man*, at that time, that he was the Christ or Messiahⁿ. Again, Christ's resurrection, and the attesting it by the powers of the Holy Spirit, was to be the last and most satisfactory proof which he thought fit to give of his commission, and to gain credit to all his former miracles. Hence we find him so often enjoining his disciples, not to publish his works till after his resurrection, and the confirming of that, by the undeniable power of the Holy Ghost on the apostles, who attested it^o.

Thirteenth remark. It was most requisite that Christ, as being our Mediator, should suffer death, if we consider him in regard to any part of his mediatory office; either, *1st*, As a prophet, or teacher come from God, to confirm the truth of his doctrine by his death, and to give us an example of obedience to the will of God, and of humility and patience. Or, *2dly*, As a priest, to offer an acceptable sacrifice for the remission of sins. Now this was the notion of an expiatory sacrifice, both among Jews and Gentiles^p, (which made them the easier to understand the nature and cause of the sacrifice of Christ,) *viz.* that the sin of one person was transferred on another, or on a beast; who was upon that devoted and offered up to God, and died and suffered in the room of the offending person; and by this oblation, the punishment of sin being laid on the sacrifice, an expiation was made for sin, and the sinner was believed to be reconciled to God. Now, on the one hand, it was not possible that the blood of bulls or goats should *take away sins*^q, that is, any otherwise than as being a type or shadow; and all that had the nature of man, besides Christ, had sins of their own, and therefore could not

^m John vi. 14, 15. ⁿ Luke ix. 21. ^o Matt. xvi. 20. and xvii. 19. Eph. i. 19.
^p Grot. de satisfactione Christi, cap. 10. and see what has been said concerning the sacrifices under the law, in Part I. chap. 9. ^q Heb. x. 4.

atone for others: wherefore, he being the only one that was partaker of man's nature, who had never sinned himself, and had united the human nature to the divine, (which gave a dignity to his sufferings,) was to *make his soul an offering for sin*^r, or to *die for our sins*^s, whereby he made an *atonement* for us^t, and became a *propitiation for our sins*^u: that is, what the sin-offerings were to the Jews, a sacrifice to appease God's anger, and to render him propitious or reconciled to us. Though there was this peculiar in Christ's sacrifice, that he was both the priest and the sacrifice too.

Lastly, It was necessary Christ should die, that as a *king*, being afterwards risen again, he might conquer and triumph over death and the grave.

The particular death which Christ suffered was by being crucified on the *cross*^x; which was a beam, or piece of wood, set in the ground upright; on which was another beam laid across near the top: the hands of the person that was crucified were stretched out and nailed to the cross beam, and his feet were nailed down to the other^y. This was a punishment among the Romans for the highest crimes, and was esteemed the most painful^z death; insomuch, that in their language they called a most violent pain, a *cruciating*^a, or suffering the cross. It was also reckoned the most infamous death, and never inflicted on a free man, but only on slaves and fugitives; and therefore called, *the punishment of slaves*^b. Whereby it appears, that Christ hath undergone the most tormenting, and shameful, or accursed death; and hath thereby *redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree*^c. The providence of God hath been observed before^d in ordering it so, that Christ should suffer under a Roman governor, otherwise he had not been crucified; that being a kind of death

^r Isa. liii. 10. ^s 1 Cor. xv. 3. ^t Rom. v. 11. ^u 1 John ii. 2. ^x Pearson on the Creed, Article 4. *was crucified.* ^y He who was to be crucified was nailed to the cross whilst it lay upon the ground, and being properly fastened to the wood, it was placed in an upright position. ^z Ibid. *Pœnæ extremum.* ^a *Cruciatius.*
^b *Servile supplicium. Ibid.* ^c Deut. xxi. 23. Gal. iii. 13. ^d In the former part, concerning the government of Pontius Pilate, chap. 22.

that was never inflicted upon any by the Jews, but by Roman governors ^c.

Fourteenth remark. Concerning Christ's manifestation of himself after his resurrection. The holy Gospel acquaints us, that the apostles saw him ascend up into heaven, but they did not actually see him arise out of his sepulchre: the reason is evident; for it was a sufficient confirmation of their faith in his resurrection, that they saw the sepulchre empty, and Christ actually appearing to, and conversing with, them; but they were not to see him in heaven till themselves were admitted thither; and therefore they ought to behold him ascending, that they might evidence the truth of it to the world.

Again, Christ, when risen from the dead, and when he ascended into heaven, was not pleased to shew himself *openly to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God*^f. These witnesses themselves had sufficient, sensible, and frequent evidences given them thereof^g. But why did he not shew himself to all the people, especially the rulers, who, if convinced, might have rendered the truth of it beyond dispute? First, The chief priests and elders, with the other obstinate Jews, would not have believed in him, though they had seen him after he was risen, and when he ascended; since they could harden their hearts against his so many wonderful works, as if wrought by the prince of devils; and had consulted to put Lazarus to death, that they might stifle the belief of Christ's divine power in raising him from the grave^h. It was also requisite that our *faith* in Christ should be attended with some difficulty, whereby Christians might be the rather entitled to the glorious reward promised theretoⁱ.

But then it has been further objected, that if, for the reasons above mentioned, Christ would not shew himself to be alive again to his declared and prejudiced enemies, why not to some indifferent persons, who were neither engaged for nor against him. Now if such indifferent persons should nevertheless not believe his doctrine, they would not have

^c Casaubon. Exercit. 16. Ann. 34. num. 92. ^f Acts x. 40, 41. ^g John xx. 19—30. and chap. xxi. Luke xxiv. 36—45. ^h John xii. 10, 11. ⁱ Ut fides, non mediocri præmio destinata, difficultate constaret. Tertul. Apol. cap. xxi.

propagated it, and so have been useless to the main design of Christ's confirming his resurrection: but if they should be convinced, then those who could do service to the doctrine of the resurrection, must be converts to Christ's religion, and therefore not indifferent, unconcerned persons: so that Christ chose the most effectual way; especially if we consider, in the second place, that the miraculous gifts, of speaking divers languages, and healing diseases, and the like, with which the apostles were endued after Christ's ascension, for a confirmation of their doctrine, were as evident proof of the truth of what they taught concerning his resurrection and ascending into heaven, as if Christ had personally appeared to the world; nay, in some sense more evident; for those hardened Jews, who should have seen Christ alive again, might have pretended to have seen his apparition, and not his real body, and so have verified our Saviour's saying, that they would not *be persuaded, though one rose from the dead*: but the many wonderful works, which were daily wrought by the apostles, in the most public manner, in testimony of the doctrine of Christ's resurrection and ascension, were the most convincing proofs of the truth of their doctrine; since thereby God himself did bear witness to it. To illustrate this matter a little further: we know, that too many have mistaken notions of the existence and the perfections of God; neither do they worship him suitably to his being; and yet, to prevent those evils, God does not think fit to manifest himself, after such a manner as perhaps some would fancy he might do; but having given men the faculties of reasoning and judging, he refers them to his glorious works, the visible *things that are made*, whereby that which *is invisible* may be *understood*, or *known of God*; so the visible confirmations of the resurrection of Christ, in the miracles wrought by the publishers of it, were the most suitable for conviction.

Fifteenth remark. There is often mention made in the Gospel, and also in the Acts, of the synagogues of the Jews. The word *synagogue* strictly signifies a place of meeting together for any purpose; but among the Jews, some think ^k

^k Grotius and Lightf. in Matt. x. 17.

it was taken, (1st,) for the lesser consistory, or court of justice, appointed in each city^l, which had power, by the permission of the Romans, to judge and determine in divers causes or controversies between them, and to punish some offenders, who belonged to such a place or synagogue, by scourging^m. Whence they apprehend, that Christ forewarned his followers to *beware of men, for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues*ⁿ.

But, (2dly,) others understand the term *synagogue*, in the common sense, to signify the place of public worship, and that our Saviour mentions the *synagogues*, in which the Christians were to be scourged, as distinct places from the *councils*, to which they were to be delivered, and that the scourging was wont to be actually inflicted in the *synagogue*^p, where they assembled for prayer and praise; and there are instances of that practice in the church histories^q; and one of the ancient fathers assigns a particular reason for this usage, *viz.* that the Jews did pretend, as it were, to “offer a sacrifice to the greater glory and praise of God, by punishing the apostles in the same place where religious worship was wont to be performed^r,” that is, in the synagogues.

The temple, which was but one in their whole country, (and that was at Jerusalem,) was the proper place of divine worship; thither the several tribes were to go up at least three times a year, (at the passover, pentecost, and feast of tabernacles;) there, and no where else, they offered sacrifice, and performed the most solemn offices of religion^s. But for the most common religious performances at home, (ever since their return from the Babylonian captivity,) they had *synagogues* dispersed up and down the whole country^t, and in

^l As the word *συναγωγὰς* is used in 1 Maccab. vii. 12. ^m Lightf. Hor. in Matt. x. 17. and cap. iv. 23. ⁿ Matt. x. 17. So chap. xxiii. 34. Acts xxii. 19. Compare Deut. xxv. 1, 2, 3. and 2 Cor. xi. 24. ^o In Matt. x. ^p Dr. Whitby (from Campeg. Vitringa. de Regim. Syn. vel. l. iii. pars i. cap. 11.) in Mark v. 22. ^q Which Grotius cites in Matt. x. 17. from Epiphanius and Eusebius, though he understands the text otherwise. ^r St. Chrysost. in Matt. x. 17. ^s A short account of the manner thereof is given in Part I. chap. ix. in the description of the place of religious worship under the ceremonial law, *viz.* the tabernacle and temple. ^t Lightf. Hor. in Matt. iv. 23. and Buxtorf. Synagog. Jud. c. x.

other parts where they inhabited, if the place could afford ten persons who had leisure and capacities fit to attend the affairs of the synagogue, and study the law; and whosoever lived where a synagogue was, and did not join with the rest at the usual times, was esteemed a bad neighbour^u. In these synagogues they assembled three times each day (as hath been said above^x) for prayer and praise, and reading and expounding the law and the prophets. Those synagogue days^y were the sabbath, the second and fifth day of each week, answerable to our Saturday, Monday, and Thursday. In these places some were *rulers* of the synagogues^z, that is, presidents, heads, or masters, to whom belonged the chief care thereof: there were also the *chazan*^a (chanter or reader) to repeat or sing the prayers aloud, with whom the rest joined in a low voice: he also, or some other called upon by him, expounded the law to the congregation. Offenders, in some cases, were wont to be *put out of the synagogue*^b, that is, excommunicated, or excluded from partaking, with the rest, in the public prayers, and religious offices there performed^c; which exclusion was esteemed scandalous, and the person thereby reckoned *as an heathen man and a publican*^d.

Sixteenth remark. To avoid mistakes in reading our Saviour's sending his apostles, or other first publishers of the Gospel, we are to observe, there were two missions of them; the first was to the Jews only, who were *the children of the kingdom*^e, the peculiar people, and to whom the promises especially belonged^f, and therefore the Gospel was first preached to them. The apostles were not *then* to go either amongst the Gentiles or Samaritans, nor make any provision either of gold or silver, or change of coats, &c. but depend entirely upon their Master's providence. Their commission was to publish, among the Jews, that *the kingdom of heaven*, the time of the Messiah, was at hand; and therefore, that they should believe in Christ, and receive him as such. The

^u Lightfoot Hor. in Matt. iv. 23.

^x Remark x. on the Gospels, numb. viii.

^y Lightfoot *ibid.*

^z Mark v. 22. Luke xiii. 14.

^a See remark x. on the Gospels, num. iii.

^b John ix. 22.

^c Leo Modena, part ii. c. 3.

^d Matt. xviii. 17.

^e Matt. viii. 12.

^f Rom. ix. 4.

apostles were also to work miracles, in confirmation of their doctrine; and as they had *freely received* from Christ the gifts of miracles, (of healing the sick, and casting out devils, &c.) they should *freely give* the benefit thereof to others^g. When the apostles had completed this mission, they gave their Lord an account of it^h. Their second mission was after Christ's resurrectionⁱ, and in this none were excluded, but they were to *go and teach all nations*, Jews and Gentiles, without exception of any, and to be *witnesses unto him, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth*^k. The latter part of our Saviour's instruction and charge^l seems^m most to respect this their second mission.

Seventeenth remark. This expression, *the coming of Christ, or the coming of the Son of man*, very often in the Gospels signifies his coming to execute that terrible judgment on the Jews, spoken of beforeⁿ, and making the Romans the instruments thereof; and sometimes, his coming to judgment at the end of the world. The greatest part of Matthew xxiv. Mark xiii. and of Luke xxi. contains Christ's prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and the dismal things which then were to befall the Jews^o; which he foretold at that time, when the Jews were in a flourishing state, and had no cause for such apprehensions, near forty years before the accomplishment. How much of those chapters last mentioned relates to the destruction of the Jews, and how much to the last day of judgment, is not plainly evident; because that destruction of the Jews, and the dreadful burnings of the city and temple, was a representation of the last day of judgment, therefore some think that Christ there speaks promiscuously of both: so that some things are to be understood of the destruction of the Jews, and others of the last day. But the words^p, *Verily I say unto you, This gene-*

^g For this first mission, see Matt. x. 5—16. Mark vi. 7, &c. Luke ix. 1, &c.

^h Luke ix. 10. ⁱ Matt. xxviii. 19. ^k Acts i. 8. ^l From Matt. x. 16, &c.

^m Grot. in Matt. x. 16. ⁿ In Part I. c. 22. ^o Grotius, Hammond, and Lightfoot in loc. compared with Dr. Wells's Paraphrase of the chapter, ^p Matt. xxiv. 34.

ration shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled, (like those ^q, *Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom,*) seem fully to demonstrate, that all before mentioned was to be accomplished whilst some men of that age lived, (as the expression, *this generation*, is used to signify by the same Evangelist ^r.) What follows ^s may relate to the last judgment day, or *the end of the world*, concerning which the disciples enquired, as well as of the destruction of the temple ^t. Those things which Christ foretold ^u concerning the destruction of the Jews by the Romans, were fully made good; as Josephus, a Jewish writer, who lived at the same time, largely shews ^x; and that so exactly, as if the historian had taken his measures as much from our Lord's prediction, as from the event; as an ancient Christian writer observes ^y, "Whosoever does compare the words of Christ, with the relations of Josephus, of the whole war, he cannot but with admiration confess the divine and most admirable prescience and prediction of our Saviour." The aforesaid Josephus ^z assures us, that there were unusual *rumours of wars, dreadful famines and pestilence, and earthquakes, fearful sights, and great signs from heaven, many false prophets, and false Christs* arose, and *deceived many*: at length, *the holy place, the city of Jerusalem, was besieged by the abomination of desolation*, that is, the Roman army, so called, because the soldiers were idolaters, and had the image of Cæsar, and, for their ensign, the eagle, the Jews abominating all images. In short, the Jews were the carcase; the Romans, by reason of their ensign, were the eagles to devour them. This *great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning*, Christ describes in the language ^a of the prophet Joel ^b, which his disciples, being Jews, were accustomed to, and understood in the figurative sense; *viz. by the sun and the moon being*

^q Matt. xvi. 28.

^r Matt. xi. 16. and xvi. 4.

^s From the 35th verse.

^t Verse 3.

^u From the beginning of the chapter to the 35th verse.

^x Of the

Wars, book 5, 6, 7. Of this at large in Part I. chap. 22.

^y Euseb. Hist. l. iii.

c. 7. ^z Joseph. *ibid.* ^a See the fifth remark on the Prophets, in Part I. and

Grot. in loc. ^b Chap. ii. 30.

darkened, and the stars falling, &c. thereby signifying an utter dissolution and destruction. Lastly, Before this judgment was fully executed, the Gospel was published, Christ having sent his angels, or messengers, the apostles, with the trumpet of the Gospel, to *gather his elect*, among the Jews and Gentiles, in the several parts of the world ^a.

CHAP. IV.

THUS much for the general remarks, in order to the better understanding of the holy Gospels. As for the contents of them, we are chiefly taught in these books, *first*, How our redemption was accomplished, and what Christ hath done and suffered, and thereby procured for us. *Secondly*, What he expects as the conditions on our parts. *Thirdly*, What his own example was, that he gave us of an holy life.

I. We are taught in these books how our redemption was accomplished; namely, that when the fulness of time was come, the Son of God took our nature upon him, being conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary; that his birth was manifested both to the Jews and Gentiles; and first to the Jewish shepherds, by an angel from heaven, a multitude of the heavenly host, or angels, praising God for it, and saying, *Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men*; that he was called by the angel's appointment *Jesus*, which signifies a Saviour, because he was to save mankind; that he was circumcised in obedience to the law, and being presented in the temple, was, by a prophetic spirit, in Simeon and Anna, one of each sex, declared to be the Christ, or Messiah, before all the people; that his birth was manifested a second time, *viz.* to the Gentiles, in the persons of the wise men, who lived eastward of Judea ^b, and who being used to contemplate the heavens, were guided by an extraordinary star, (a proper type of that light, which he was

^a See Lightfoot Hor. in Matt. xxiv. 31. ^b Probably in Arabia, whose inhabitants were esteemed by the Jews *the men of the east*, or the eastern people, Jer. xlix. 28. Pocock. Specimen Hist. Arab. edit. Oxon. 1650. p. 34. So the ancient Christians, vid. Grot. in Matt. ii. 1.

to bring to the Gentile world.) These came to adore him, as the Messiah, or great King, which was then expected to appear by the Jews; from whom the neighbouring eastern people might learn the same. (This guiding those wise men, who were Gentiles, by a star, is called by the Church the *Epiphany*, or Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles.) This occasioned Herod's jealousy, and resolution to destroy him; but he was (by an order from God in a dream to Joseph) conveyed into Egypt; whence, by the like order, he was conveyed back, after the death of Herod.

At twelve years of age, he manifested extraordinary wisdom, in hearing and propounding questions to the learned doctors of the Jews. After this, we have no account of him (except his living with, and being subject to, his reputed father Joseph, and Mary his mother, and growing in favour with God and man, and following the employment of a carpenter^b) till he was about thirty years of age^c. Then we read, that his forerunner, John the Baptist, who, though not the very person of Elias, (as himself owns he was not^d,) yet was the messenger that should take upon him the office of the promised Elias, (according to the prophecies^e,) proclaimed his approach, making thereby as it were the beginning^f of the Gospel state^g, and prepared the people to receive him, by *preaching repentance*, (that their sins might not render them unfit for the new state of the Gospel,) and *baptizing* the penitents, (since baptism was used by the Jews, as one method of admitting proselytes into their church.) When our Lord was baptized, the heavens were opened unto him, (probably with a bright shining,) and the Holy Ghost came down in a visible shape like a dove upon him; and he was declared, before a great multitude of people who resorted to John, by a voice from heaven, to be the Son of God; whereby he was, as it were, installed into his ministerial function, and received the unction, or anointing of the Holy Ghost.

^b Justin Martyr says, in making ploughs and yokes. Tryph. p. 270. Compare Grot. in Matt. xiii. 55. ^c Luke iii. 23. ^d John i. 21. ^e Isa. xl. 3, 4. Mal. iii. 1. and iv. 5. ^f Quasi non et nos limitem quandam agnoscamus Johannem constitutum inter vetera et nova; ad quem desineret Judaismus, et a quo inciperet Christianismus. *Tertull. adv. Marc.* l. iv. §. 33. ^g Luke xvi. 16.

From that time he solemnly took upon him the prophetic office, and entered on the great work of our redemption. And first of all, he was carried into the wilderness or desert, where he fasted forty days, (as Moses and Elias, the types of him, were formerly enabled to do,) and being assaulted by the devil, he overcame all his temptations. Afterwards he went up and down the country of the Jews, testifying the approach of the Gospel state, or *the kingdom of heaven*, declaring the love of his Father, teaching his holy will, and giving an example of piety and charity; with assured promises of unspeakable and eternal glory and bliss unto all those who believe in him, and live according to his doctrine; and severe threatenings of eternal misery unto those who do not; he comforted the penitent, and encouraged them to come to him for ease of the burden of their sins; he confirmed the truth of his being the Messiah and the Son of God, by fulfilling the old prophecies, and by working miracles, as raising the dead, healing the sick, and casting out devils.

He chose twelve apostles, (which word *apostles* signifies messengers, or persons sent,) their proper and peculiar office being to be *witnesses* of what he did and said^h, and to publish the same afterward to the worldⁱ, and also to found or establish his church on earth, and to settle an order of bishops and pastors to succeed them in the government, and instructing of the same^k. He chose twelve to be his apostles, according to the number of the twelve tribes of Israel, most probably that the founders of the Christian church might be of the same number with those that founded the Jewish; and they were mean persons, as fishermen, neither learned nor noble, and so were the least prejudiced, and the more apt to embrace the naked truth, and the less liable to suspicion of inventing and forming a new sect and scheme of religion; but chiefly by their mean descent and education it appeared, that they were enabled to preach and work miracles by the power of God, and the assistance of the divine Spirit, (God having chosen *the foolish and weak things of the world to confound*

^h Acts i. 8. ⁱ Matt. xxviii. 19. ^k John xx. 21, 22. Acts xiv. 23. 2 Tim. ii. 2. See Casaubon, Exercit. 14. ann. 32. numb. v.

the wise, and things that are mighty.) Farther, he foretold his own sufferings, death, and resurrection; that his Gospel should prevail over the world; and that the Jews, with their city of Jerusalem and the temple, should be shortly destroyed.

When he had nearly finished the work he had to do on earth, and the time was approaching for his passion, he made a public and kingly entrance into Jerusalem, (as it was foretold he should do,) riding on an ass, great numbers of people spreading their garments in the way, and otherwise honouring him as the Messiah, crying *Hosanna to the Son of David*; and then going into the temple, with authority, he drove out those who profaned it. The evening before his death, having given the necessary encouragement and promises of comfort and support to his disciples, at the celebration of the great feast of the passover, he ordained the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, for our solemn remembrance of his passion, and as a means whereby we receive the benefit of it; and afterwards, having prayed to his heavenly Father, (instead of escaping from them, as formerly he did, his *hour* being now *come*,) he went voluntarily into the garden, where he foreknew some were lying in wait for him, there offering himself as a lamb to be slain for the sins of the world.

He suffered terrible conflicts and agonies, was treated with vile indignities and blasphemous scoffings, and was cruelly scourged; and at length, although pronounced innocent by the governor, was condemned, and underwent, for our sakes, the most bitter, painful, and shameful death of the cross; at which time the sun was eclipsed in an extraordinary manner, it being at the time of the passover, which was kept when the moon was fourteen days old; so it was then full moon, when there happens no natural eclipse, which is only caused by the new moon's being placed between our sight and the sun: then there was also as prodigious an earthquake^m, so that the graves of many saints were opened, and thereby a way was

^m Both which are taken notice of by the ancient astrologers and historians, Grot. in Matt. xxvii. 45. and Tertullian appealed to the records of the Roman empire for the eclipse, Apolog. c. 21. *Eum mundi casum relatum in Arcanis vestris habetis.*

made to attend him at his resurrection: also, among other prodigies, the veil of the temple (which separated the highest and most sacred part of it from the rest) was rent in two, from the top to the bottom, (which no doubt was a token that God had put a period to the sacrifices and ministrations hitherto performed there.)

He was buried, and rose again on the third day after, and shewed himself to be alive at sundry times for forty days, often appearing to his disciples; and at length, in a solemn manner, with the sign of *breathing*, conferred on them the apostolical and ministerial commission of publishing the Gospel, and establishing and governing his church"; and encouraged them with a promise of sending down *the* (gifts and powers of the) *Holy Ghost*, (which the next book of the New Testament, *viz.* the Acts of the Apostles, acquaints us how he performed, as we shall find in the history thereof.) In the mean time, they were to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit, which should comfort and teach them, and assist and support them in the discharge of their commission, to publish salvation unto all mankind, and to establish his church on earth: to which purpose, he gave them a solemn command to go up and down the world, and to preach the Gospel, *beginning at Jerusalem*, or first to the Jews, and then to the people of all nations or countries, (whether Jews or Gentiles,) and to admit them into his church by the sacrament of Baptism, and teach them to observe his laws, promising to be with them and their successors *unto the end of the world*; and, lastly, he blessed them, and ascended into heaven, there to be our Mediator with the Father, and to prepare a place of joy for us; in the mean time, governing his church on earth, with his holy word and Spirit, till he should come again at the last day to judgment, and conduct us into the kingdom of glory, and eternal life.

Note, That from Christ's birth to his manifestation of himself to the world, it was about thirty years, and from thence it was three years more to his ascension into heaven; so that he lived on earth in the whole about thirty-three years.

ⁿ See what is said on the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, concerning the effusion of the Holy Ghost.

CHAP. V.

The Condition on our parts.

II. WE are farther taught in the holy Gospels, that our Lord Jesus Christ, when he published his love in dying for us, did also declare the condition on our parts; and that is, not only to believe that he was the Christ and the Saviour, but also to take him to be our Lord and King, and to live in obedience to the divine laws. In Matthew^a we read, that *every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire*; and that it is not enough to call Christ *Lord*, to own him as our Saviour, unless we also *do the will of his Father which is in heaven, &c.* Now this heavenly will Christ declares and explains in his sermon on the mount, Matt. v. vi. vii. and in divers other places of the holy Gospel; which give us a true notion of the Christian religion, the design of which is to raise our souls above the sensual pleasures of the body, and the delights of this lower world, and to beget in us an heavenly temper, an inward purity of mind, and an entire conformity to the will of God. Here follows the substance of Christ's sermon:

I. ^b Our Lord pronounces divers persons *blessed*, in circumstances which the world has not such an opinion of; as, first, *the poor in spirit*, who, from a sense of their own imperfection, are humble and lowly minded; *for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*, they are fitted to receive and entertain the Gospel of Christ, and are better qualified for, and have the better title to, the grace and assistance of the Holy Spirit here, and to happiness hereafter. (This may be applied to those poor in worldly possessions^c, who, because poor on earth, are the more zealous to attain heaven.) *Blessed are they that mourn*; by which we may understand, in the first place, those that mourn for their spiritual state, their want of true holiness and purity; and for their sins, so as to hate and

^a Matt. vii. 19, 20, 21. xi. 28, 29, 30. and xvi. 27.

^b Matt. v. 1—13.

^c Luke vi. 20.

renounce them for the future, contrary to the insensibility and hardness of negligent and presumptuous sinners. *For they shall be comforted*, by a reasonable assurance that God accepts their contrition now in this world, and in the next will receive them to everlasting joy. They are also blessed, who mourn in a Christian manner under afflictions, are patient and submissive when they are in a sorrowful state, (seeing it is the chastisement of God, who corrects, as a father his children, for their ^dgood.) *They shall be comforted*, with frequent refreshings and supports of the Holy Spirit ^e; and at length be eternally comforted in heaven, in proportion to their sufferings on earth ^f. In the next place, *Blessed are the meek*, the mild and gentle, who are of a calm and quiet disposition, *for they shall inherit the earth*; enjoy content and quiet in their minds, and so live as comfortably in the world as can be expected, whatever portion they may have therein; and hereafter inherit *the new heaven and the new earth*, which shall be revealed in God's due time. Farther, *Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness*, desire earnestly, and as earnestly endeavour to obtain such righteousness, whereby they may be approved of, and accepted by God, (as hunger and thirst inclines us both to desire and endeavour to obtain what will satisfy,) *for they shall be filled*, or satisfied therewith. Again, *Blessed are the merciful*; who are disposed in their minds to have pity on such as are in any want or trouble, (whether in regard to the body, or the soul, or their worldly state,) and actually express the same as opportunity is offered; and are also apt to forgive wrongs, and bear with infirmities; *for they themselves shall obtain mercy* at the hand of God. They are also *blessed*, who are not only outwardly religious, but *pure in heart*, whose consciences do not accuse them of love to any sin, are free from hypocrisy, and careful to keep their minds, which are as clearly seen by God as the outward actions, as free as possible from the pollution of evil thoughts and desires. *They shall see God*, (who is a pure mind or spirit himself;) they shall

^d Heb. xii. 7, &c.
25. 2 Cor. iv. 17.

^e 2 Cor. i. 3, 4, 5.

^f John xvi. 20, 21, 22. Luke xvi.

know his divine truths, and enjoy him for ever^g. *Blessed also are the peace-makers*; who are of a peaceable temper themselves^h, and easy to be reconciled, and are also ready to compose the differences of others; *for they*, by reason of their likeness to the God of peace, *shall be called*, or owned as, *the children of God*, and have their portion accordingly, of grace here, and happiness in heaven. Lastly, they are *blessed who are persecuted or reviled for righteousness sake*; who choose rather to suffer wrongfully out of love to God, and for a good conscience, (either in respect to the profession, or the practice of true religion,) than to save themselves by a sinful compliance. *For theirs is the kingdom of heaven*; they act as true members of Christ's church on earth, and their reward shall be great in heaven.

2. ⁱChrist teaches, that as it is the virtue of *salt* to season food, and preserve it from corruption; so it is the office of the pastors of his church, and all other his followers, (according to their places and stations,) to endeavour to season the manners of men, and keep them from the corruption and putrefaction of sin, by their good examples and instructions, or any other Christian methods; and to that purpose, although we are not to perform religious actions, which are of a private nature, (such as *prayers* in the closet, some *alms-giving*, private *fasting*, &c.) in a public manner, to gain applause to ourselves; yet the public actions and behaviour of Christian pastors and people should be to others as a *light* and encouragement to *good works*, and thereby a means to bring *glory* to God, (as by religious behaviour in the public worship of God, by temperance, sobriety, chastity, justice, and fairness in our dealings, humility, meekness, charity, living in love, and doing good to others, &c.) since, by reason of our holy profession, we must expect to be taken notice of as *a city set on a hill*, and we should be as *a candle on a candlestick, that giveth light unto all that are in the house*.

3. ^kThat no Christian may fancy himself freed from the observance of any moral duty, which God had enjoined of

^g 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Psal. xxiv. 3, 4.

^h So *pacificus* is a peaceable minded man, as well as a peace-maker. See Grot. in loc.

ⁱ Matt. v. 13—17. ^k Matt. v. 17—21.

old, Christ declares, that he came *not to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfil*; and that not only by fulfilling what was typified and foretold, but also by explaining the full sense and spiritual importance of the moral laws; and chiefly in opposition to the false interpretations put upon them by the Scribes and Pharisees: we are not therefore to allow ourselves in a wilful neglect of what may be esteemed the *least of God's commandments*; much less teach others to do so too, (as the Scribes and Pharisees did by their misinterpretations, and in other respects,) seeing that neglect is an opposing God's authority, who gave such as are esteemed the least commandments, as well as those which are greater; and so far are we from being made easier in the observation of God's laws, by our becoming Christians, that we are to take care, that our *righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees* of old, who considered chiefly the bare ceremonials of religion, and the external acts, with a neglect of the substantial parts of judgment, mercy, and truth; but we are to practise according to these last mentioned in the first place, though not to leave the other undone: we are also to exceed those Scribes and Pharisees, by not only complying with the bodily service, as they mostly did, but the spiritual, as being the great design and intention of the law; and not only being solicitous, like them, to avoid any open and known breach of the divine laws, but also the lower degrees of sin; suppressing all the evil motions and desires of the heart, and shunning all occasions, inducements, or temptations to impiety; otherwise we *shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven*. As in the following instances:

4. ¹ We are not only to avoid *killing*, or murder, but also rash, unjust, and revengeful *anger* and rage; all disdainful scoffing, (expressed among the Jews by the term *Raca*,) and all bitter railings and reproachings, such as *thou fool* imports; and also all uncharitableness, envy, and variance; insomuch, that if our Christian *brother hath ought against us*, can justly charge us with any injury or wrong done to him by us, in

¹ Matt. v. 21—27.

his person, goods, or good name, we are to *reconcile* ourselves to him, and make him all reasonable satisfaction that lies in our power, before we can expect that God should accept our spiritual *gifts* and sacrifices of prayer and praise, &c. (because till that satisfaction be made, we still continue to be injurious, and so do not leave the sin, nor consequently truly repent, without which God will not accept us;) and this *agreement* and reconciliation with an *adversary* is to be made *quickly*, lest the present opportunity be lost, and the suffering be without remedy, and endless.

5. ^m We are not only to be free from *adultery*, but we are also to suppress any inward motion tending thereto, occasioned by lustful and wanton looks, *plucking out the eye, and cutting off the hand*, which causes to offend, that is, cutting off the occasion of sin; rather denying ourselves the use of our eyes, at such a time, than that they should ensnare us in sin by intemperate gazing. For, if there were no other way to avoid the being tempted, it were better to lose not only the use of these members of the body, but even the very members themselves, and thereby escape hell, and obtain heaven. We are also not to give occasions for adultery in a wife, by *putting her away*, because we are angry or dislike her, (as the Jews were permitted to do,) thereby causing her to commit adultery, either by exposing her to the temptation of incontinency, or of marrying another in her proper husband's lifetime, contrary to the first institution of marriage.

6. ⁿ We are not only to avoid perjury, but also profane and common swearing, (as the Jews were wont to swear by *heaven, the earth, Jerusalem, &c.* which was all one as swearing by God himself, by reason of the relation those things have to him; they would also swear by their *head*, but that too is God's, and no man hath power to make the least change in it;) but we should, in our *communication*, or ordinary discourse, plainly affirm or deny, as the matter requires; for whatsoever is more than such, *yea, yea, and nay, nay*, or a plain affirmation or denial, *cometh of evil*, from evil causes, as dishonesty, falseness to one's word, &c.

^m Matt. v. 27—33.

ⁿ Matt. v. 33—38.

7. ° However, among the Jews, the judges were, upon complaint made to them, to punish for the loss of an *eye*, or a *tooth*, by inflicting the like punishment upon him that did the wrong^o. Yet, as private persons, Christians should be easy to be reconciled, and *not resist evil*, or seek to have a person, who may have done him harm, to be punished in the same manner; but patiently endure affronts, nay, *turn the other cheek*, and part with *a coat or cloak*; that is, rather bear injuries, and venture further wrong, than oppose violence in such manner as the Jews did, much less, out of a spirit of revenge, and for the gratifying of hatred and ill-will, *recompence evil for evil*^r. Neither should we scornfully turn away from him that truly needs, and asks our kindness, but we must cheerfully succour him, by giving or lending.

8. † We are (in opposition to the doctrine of the Scribes and Pharisees) to forgive enemies, and *do good* for evil; which is *perfect* charity; for so God, by vouchsafing the *sun* and *rain* to the *good* and *evil* too, behaves himself towards us; but if we restrain our love and favour to them only who *love* us, which even *publicans*, the worst of men, do, we can expect no *reward* of God: but our charity must be *perfect*, as our heavenly Father is.

9. * When we give *alms*, or *pray*, or *fast*, we are not to do those good works in a more public manner than their nature requires, and thereby chiefly seek to be observed and praised of men, as the hypocritical Pharisees were wont to do; but to approve ourselves to God; and although we are to *continue instant*, or be frequent and much in prayer, so long as we are also attentive and devout; yet we are not to use *vain repetitions*, or a needless multiplying of words, (as they[†] who *cried from morning till noon, O Baal, hear us,*) as if God were ignorant of our wants, or slow of apprehension, or absent for the present time, &c. whereas the true God *knoweth what things we are in need of*, and is inclined to do us good, on condition of our dependence on him, and devoutest prayers to him.

° Matt. v. 38—43. P Deut. xix. 18, &c. q Rom. xii. 17. † Matt. v. 43. to the end. * Matt. vi. 1—9. and 16—19. † In 1 Kings xviii. 26.

As to one particular here mentioned, *viz. fasting*, we may observe, that Christ supposes it a duty, though he does not expressly enjoin it, by condemning some abuse of it; so that, when fasting tends to the humbling and afflicting ourselves, in detestation of sin, or to the restraining our sinful appetites, and rendering us more devout and attentive to spiritual and heavenly affairs, then it is a necessary and religious duty; although the time and manner, and other circumstances of private fasting, depend on its being conducive to those ends and purposes.

10. ⁱ We are to use devoutly the Lord's Prayer, which himself hath taught us; and be as ready to be reconciled to others, as we ask forgiveness at God's hands.

A short Exposition of the Lord's Prayer.

OUR^k *Father*, and therefore most *inclined* to do us good.

Which art in heaven; who rulest on high over all, and so art most *able* to relieve us.

Hallowed^l *be thy name*; may thy glorious Majesty be above all things honoured and glorified^m; and whatever more immediately relates to thee, be suitably regarded, by us and all the world.

*Thy kingdom come*ⁿ; make all the world *subject* to thy Son Christ by the Gospel; rule in our hearts by thy grace, and hasten thy kingdom of *glory*.

Thy will be done; by our *obedience* to thy commands, and *submission* to all thy pleasure.

In earth as it is in heaven; (though not so perfectly, yet as near as may be,) with that *readiness* and *constancy* as by the angels in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread: give, and bless to our use, the necessaries of this life, from time to time.

ⁱ Matt. vi. 9—16.

^k See remark x. on the Gospel foregoing, num. 14.

^l *Hallowed* here signifies acknowledged or accounted holy; and thereupon our having a due reverence and veneration for God, and whatever more immediately relates to him. ^m The *name* of God signifies himself, and what relates to him, Psal. xx. 1. See the first general rule for understanding the Scripture, num. 20. (in Part I. chap. ix.)

ⁿ The kingdom of the Messiah. See the second general remark foregoing on the Gospels.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. Pardon our sins past, as we are prone to mercy and forgiveness towards one another.

And lead us not into temptation: for the time to come, suffer ° us not to be ensnared by temptations again to sin.

But deliver us from evil: from the devil and sin, and from all evil and mischief, from thy wrath, and from everlasting damnation.

For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever: all which we beg of thee, for thou art our King, and the power belongs to thee, and therefore all glory be to thee for evermore. *Amen*, so be it, good Lord.

This short prayer, we see, contains the substance of what we need ask of God, both for our souls and bodies, for this world and that which is to come: it was made by Christ himself, and therefore it is the *best*, the *most perfect*, and *spiritual* prayer, the *safest* for us to use, and the most *acceptable* to God, when we pray to him in the words of his beloved Son. This prayer may be often in a day repeated by us, and that not only in the chamber, but when we are walking or riding; in the shop, or in the field: for it is Christ's command ^p, *that men ought always* (or constantly) *to pray, and not to faint*, or be weary of this duty. But as we are to prefer this excellent divine form of prayer, and use it frequently; so we may also use other more large and special forms, both of public and private devotion, since there are so many particular occasions for the same.

11. To proceed ^q. Great care must be taken, that, however we are to abide in our lawful callings, and may improve as well our earthly as heavenly talents, so far as is consistent with the duties of Christianity; and also are to be thankful for all conveniences of this life; yet that we are not to be most solicitous for the laying up *earthly treasures*, which are so fading and subject to casualties, but those which are *hea-*

° See the first general rule for interpreting the Scripture, num. 21. in Part I. chap. i. §. 9. P Luke xviii. 1. q Matt. vi. 19—25.

venly and eternal: for *where our chief treasure is, there will our heart be also.* To this purpose, as we take care of *the eye, the light of the body,* seeing if it be faulty, the other members of the body cannot duly perform their offices; so we should take the best care we can, that the eye of the soul, the understanding and judgment, be rightly informed, both in the excellency of spiritual and heavenly things, and also in the value and use of the earthly; lest our whole desires and endeavours be after the latter, to the neglect of the only real treasures in heaven. For we *cannot serve,* or cleave to, *God and mammon,* that is, God and the world both together, no more than one can *serve two masters,* whose wills are contrary to each other; God requiring us to love him with all our heart, to place our chiefest confidence in his power and goodness, to set our affections on things above, and attend most to the business of religion, justice, and charity; all which the world would keep us from.

12. † There is no cause why we should be too *thoughtful,* and solicitous, or immoderately concerned, for the things of this life; such anxiety is inconsistent with a firm belief of the goodness and providence of God, and betrays a distrust of both; it is God who gave us *life* and a *body;* and therefore will not deny us the lesser benefit of food and raiment, which are necessary to preserve them: it is God who supports all the meaner creatures, the *fowls* and plants, according to their natures; and sure he will not neglect us. Besides, we, who cannot *add one cubit* to our height or *stature,* cannot with all our solicitude provide for ourselves without God's blessing; which the Gentiles which have not such notions of, and dependence on, as we have, and therefore they are more solicitous in seeking after earthly things: but our *heavenly Father knoweth* what is most needful and best for us. Not but that we are to do our duty in our lawful callings, but our first and chief aim should be to secure our interest in *the kingdom of God,* (the redemption of Christ, and the joys of heaven,) and for that end to please and serve God, and then rest on his power and goodness for all necessary things of this life; so that there is no pretence for too much thoughtfulness and dis-

† Matt. vi. 25, to the end.

trustful uneasiness *for to-morrow*, or the time to come; the evil or trouble of each day may be enough, without adding to it, by our being troubled beforehand.

13. * We should not rashly censure, *judge*, and *condemn* others, (for example, either from uncertain reports, taking words and notions in the worst sense, making no allowance for their ignorance, inadvertency, or being surprised, or determining of them from any calamity that befalls them, through the providence of God, in this world,) for by such rash judging, we shall bring upon ourselves the judgment of God: but we ought first to examine and reform ourselves; and when we have *cast the beam out of our own eye*, have amended our own greater faults, at least that may be so in God's account, (such as pride and arrogance, envy and malice, self-conceit and hypocrisy, being encouraged by unworthy motives to good actions, &c.) then we are the better fitted to *pull the mote out of our brother's eye*, to advise others to amend theirs. As for the stubborn and incorrigible, we are to leave them to God; for it is in vain to bestow our holy advice on such *dogs*, or *cast our pearls before such swine*, who usually *trample them under their feet*; do not profit by our kindness, but rather *turn again*, and mischief us.

14. † We ought to be constant and earnest in *asking*, that is, in prayers and devotions; God having mercifully declared that he will be prevailed upon by our importunity, to grant us what he knows to be good for us, especially on our prayers for *the Holy Spirit*, his gracious assistance in his service; and to make us the less fearful in this respect, our Lord appeals to our own judgment of the disposition of a *father* to his children; assuring us withal, that God our *heavenly Father* hath, much more than earthly parents, a fatherly kindness for us.

15. † Seeing God so deals with us as a kind Father, we ought to be followers of God, in our dealings one with another; which we may do, by observing carefully the reasonable and excellent rule our Lord hath given us, (in all our dealings, and in all points of justice and charity, and in all relations towards

* Matt. vii. 1—7. † Matt. vii. 7—12. † Matt. vii. 12, 13, compared with Luke vi. 30, 31, 32.

one another, as parents, children, masters, servants, &c.) *viz.* to do unto others as we would be content, and should esteem fit and reasonable, *they should do unto us*, in the like case, if we were in their place, and they in ours; for this is the substance of our duty one towards another, contained in *the law and the prophets*, or the holy Scriptures.

16. ^y Notwithstanding the difficulties of a godly life, we are nevertheless to *strive* to walk in the path of religion, (which we may do through the assistance and grace of God, to be obtained by prayer,) though it may appear *strait* and *narrow*, by reason of our evil inclinations, customs, and habits, or the disappointments and sufferings we may be exposed to; and although *few* in comparison go that way, because it *leads* to eternal life; on the other hand, we are by no means, at any time, to run with the multitude into the way of impiety, though it seems *broad*, (most agreeable to our natural tempers and vicious inclinations,) and although *many* go that way, because it leads to hell and destruction.

17. ^z We are moreover to take heed to ourselves, in our searching after the narrow path of true religion and piety, lest we be seduced by *false prophets* or instructors into any error or sinful practice. Such usually appear *in sheep's clothing*, as very innocent and harmless, (making great outward shews of holiness, devotion, and zeal for religion, and give smooth words,) but *inwardly are ravening wolves*, as being viciously disposed themselves, and having designs upon those whom they deceive, making advantage of them, and, which is worse, too often to their eternal ruin; but whatever be the outward appearance of such seducers, we may *know them by their fruits*; that is, not only their manner of life and conversation, (for they are said to come in sheep's clothing, as pretendedly harmless and pious,) but by the fruits of their doctrines, or those practices which their doctrines have a natural tendency to promote and encourage: forasmuch as it is inconsistent with

^x That other precept in Matt. xix. 19. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*, may be explained in the same manner, as teaching us to place ourselves in our neighbour's stead, and to express that degree of love and good-will towards him, as we might then expect from him. ^y Matt. vii. 13—15. ^z Matt. vii. 15—21.

the nature of God to promote or encourage any doctrine or practice which is not morally good, or which is morally evil, (which we may judge of by the light of reason, and the revelation of God's will in the holy Scriptures.) This care is more especially to be taken, seeing, as it follows,

18. ^y In order to our *entering into the kingdom of heaven*, it is not sufficient to make profession of Christianity, saying unto Christ, *Lord, Lord*; that is, owning ourselves the outward members of his church, and relying on him for salvation; but we must also *do the will* of God (by a conscientious discharge of our duties, as of the worship and service of God, and of justice and peace, and charity towards men, and sobriety and chastity in respect to ourselves;) and so far is this true, that although men may have preached to others, and might have *the gift of prophecy*, and a power of working miracles in Christ's name, they may be disowned by him at the last day, for their iniquity and neglect of holy living.

19. ^z Hence it is, that whosoever *heareth and doeth* the will of God, is like unto a *house built upon a rock*. Amidst all the *floods* and storms of temptations, persecutions, or other afflictions, and at the time of death, and the day of judgment, he shall stand firm in God's favour, and be happy for ever.

Thus much for Christ's sermon. There are many other lessons he has taught us, which are mentioned in several parts of the Gospel; such as these following:

^a To be most afraid of offending God, who cannot only, as a man, punish *the body*, but also destroy *both soul and body in hell*.

^b To take heed lest the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, *choke the word* of God, which we have heard, and hinder us from bringing forth good fruit.

^c That seeing we expect forgiveness of innumerable sins at God's hands, we must be inclined to *forgive one another*, and be reconciled even until *seventy times seven*; that is, after many provocations and injuries.

^y Matt. vii. 21--24. ^z Matt. vii. 24 to the end. ^a Matt. x. 28. ^b Matt. xiii. 22. ^c Matt. xviii. 21, &c. to the end, and Luke xvii. 34.

^d That the *marriage* vow is to be kept sacred; because those two, the husband and wife, are by God united into one; and that nothing but falseness to the bed, which is a breaking of that union, can justify a *divorcement*.

^e That it much concerns us to be careful, lest riches hinder us from *entering into the kingdom of heaven*; and to that purpose, not to *trust in riches*, so as to place confidence in, and to have too great affection for them; but rather *forsake all*, part with all our wealth in the world, when God calls for it, that is, when we cannot keep our wealth and a good conscience both together.

^f That churches are not to be profaned, but used as the houses of prayer, consecrated to God's honour and worship.

^g That we detain not what belongs to God for the maintenance of his glory and service, nor be slack in paying tribute or taxes to kings and governors.

^h That we love and serve the Lord our God very heartily and sincerely, with all our affections, and above all other things.

ⁱ That we should not be *vain-glorious*, hunting after praises, and affecting honourable places and titles; nor like those whom the Jews called *rabbies*, or doctors, and *masters*, who claimed authority and dominion over the faith of others, according to their own will, as their absolute directors; but we should instruct each other according to the doctrine which Christ, our only proper *Master*, hath established.

^k That we should *watch*, and be on our guard, lest death summon us in an unprepared condition.

^l By the parables of the *ten virgins*, and the *talents*, Christ teaches us that we carefully use and improve the present time and opportunity for religion, and the working out our salvation, and not defer it till it be too late.

^m That giving meat and drink to the *hungry and thirsty*,

^d Matt. xix. 5, &c. to verse 10. ^e Matt. xix. 23. to the end of that chapter, and Mark x. 24. ^f Matt. xxi. 12, 13. ^g Matt. xxii. 21. ^h Matt. xxii. 37.

ⁱ Matt. xxiii. 5—13. ^k Matt. xxiv. 42. to the end of that chapter, and Mark xiii. 33. to the end of that chapter. ^l Matt. xxv. 1—31. ^m Matt. xxv. 34—41. and Luke xiv. 12—15.

succouring the honest and distressed *strangers*, clothing the *naked*, visiting and tending the *sick*, and relieving the poor *prisoners*, are such good works, as will be owned by Christ at the great day of judgment as done to himself; and will entitle us to be invited with, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*

ⁿ That the sin of omission in not relieving the poor and distressed, &c. will certainly bring on us the wrath of God, shut us out from heaven, and be the occasion of our being condemned to the *everlasting fire* of hell.

^o That we celebrate the *Lord's Supper*, by a thankful remembrance and representation of Christ's love in dying for us.

^p From the widow's *two mites*, Christ shews, that where there is a little, something must be bestowed in charity; and that he will accept of alms according to the ability of the giver.

^q That when we have *put our hands to the plough*, have engaged ourselves in the service of Christ and his church, or in a religious course of life in general, we take great care that the profits or pleasures of the world may not call us off.

^r By the parable of the man that fell among thieves, Christ shews, that we must account any one as a neighbour whom we may be concerned with, as well as him that lives near us; and that we are to lay hold on every opportunity of relieving those that need our help.

^s That instead of the Pharisees cleansing of *cups and platters*, the giving alms is the Christian way to *purify and cleanse* the rest of our estates and possessions from what may be hurtful in them.

^t From the parable of the *rich man*, whose brains were contriving to build greater barns, when that night he was to die, and leave all, we are taught to be careful, that the love of this vain world may not disappoint and befool us, to the ruin of our souls.

ⁿ Matt. xxv. 41. to the end of that chapter, and Luke xvi. 19. to the end of that chapter. ^o Matt. xxvi. 26—29. and Luke xxii. 19—21. ^p Mark xii. 41.
^q Luke ix. 62. ^r Luke x. 30—38. ^s Luke xi. 41. ^t Luke xii. 16.

^u When heavy judgments befall others, not to censure them as greater sinners than ourselves; but to look at home, and repent of our own sins, lest we *also perish*.

^x Christ, by his acceptance of Zaccheus's restitution, teaches us, that we must *restore* what has been unjustly gotten. The reason is evident; because so long as, for want of restitution, we keep what is of right another man's, we still continue unjust; and so, by not forsaking the sin, we cannot be true penitents, and consequently have no title to forgiveness.

^y Our Lord maketh it a peculiar character of his religion, that we *love one another, as he hath loved us*; which he calls a *new commandment*. Not but that the loving one another is a branch of the law of nature, arising from our inclination to society; in which there can be neither advantage nor pleasure, without mutual affection. Again, the loving one another was a precept of Moses, and that as one's own *self*^z. But then the Jews limited this to their own people; and had no regard to others, who were not Jews, or proselytes^a: which occasioned the lawyer's question, *Who is my neighbour*^b? Whereas Christ extends the command to all persons one may be concerned with, (bidding us to do as the Samaritan, a stranger, did to the man that *fell among thieves*^c;) nay, even unto *enemies*^d, and also proposes the measure and degree of love, in a higher manner than the Jews thought of; *as I have loved you*. Lastly, Christ might call this mutual love a *new commandment*, as having made it the proper badge or mark of the Christian religion; thereby distinguishing his followers from others; *By this shall men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another*^e.

^f We must pray in the name of Jesus Christ, so our prayers shall be heard.

These, and other discourses of our Lord, we should often seriously read; being well assured, that as holy baptism has made us the members of Christ, that is, subjects of his kingdom; so unless we behave ourselves as such, in avoiding what

^u Luke xiii. 1—6. ^x Luke xix. 8, 9. ^y John xiii. 34, 35 ^z Levit.

xix. 18. ^a Grot. in Matt. v. 43. Lightf. Hor. in Luke x. 29. ^b Luke x. 29.

^c Luke x. 29, &c. ^d Matt. v. 44. ^e Matt. xiii. 35. ^f John xiv. 13.

is forbidden, and doing what he commands, we shall lose all the benefits of it.

CHAP. VI.

Christ's own example.

III. **FURTHERMORE**, as the holy Gospel gives us the account of what our Lord Jesus Christ hath done and suffered, and of what he hath required of us to observe and do; so also it acquaints us with our Lord's own example and pattern, which he hath given us, in the time of his public manifestation of himself: not indeed, where his acts were demonstrations of his divinity and Messiahship; as in his fasting forty days and forty nights, &c. but according to his ordinary conversation; as in the following instances:

1st, By a due retirement from the world sometimes, in order to our conversing with God, by divine meditations and devotion: but not by that sort of solitude, so much magnified in the Church of Rome, or an entire renouncing all manner of conversation with the world; but by a mixture of religious retirement, and the necessary, lawful employments of this life: for such was the pattern our Lord set us. Sometimes we read of him, as resorting to places of the greatest concourse; *the market-place*, and *synagogues*, and *feasts*^g: and sometimes he retired into a *wilderness*, or *garden*, for religious and heavenly exercises^h, and particularly for prayer and devotion in private; ⁱ *When he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray.* ^k *And it came to pass as he was alone praying.* And when the day was taken up in teaching and healing diseases, &c. rather than time should be wanting for his wonted devotion, *in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed*^l.

2dly, As for public devotion, his custom was to repair to the *synagogues*, where the public worship was wont to be

^g John v. 1, &c. Matt. iv. 23. John ii. 1, &c. ^h Matt. iv. 1, &c. John xviii. 1, 2. ⁱ Matt. xiv. 23. ^k Luke ix. 18. ^l Mark i. 35.

performed ^m, and to go to Jerusalem to the celebration of the great feasts ⁿ.

3dly, Submission to the will of his heavenly Father, and patience under all crosses and pains, and all manner of sufferings ^o. *O my Father, if this cup (of affliction) may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done.*

4thly, Peaceable subjection to the government where he lived; insomuch that Pilate having strictly examined him as to that point, (as it much concerned him to do, considering the jealousy and severity of his master the emperor Tiberius,) and heard all the malicious accusations of his enemies, while they accused him of *perverting the nation, stirring up the people, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar*; he was forced to declare, that he *found no fault in him, touching those things whereof they accused him* ^p.

5thly, Justice in rendering to all their dues; so, rather than the accustomed tax should not be paid, and offence given in that respect, having no money, he wrought a miracle to procure it out of the fish's mouth ^q.

6thly, Love and charity to all persons, in every place where he came; *going about, and doing all good offices for them, and refusing to none at any time what might tend to their well being; but doing good both to men's souls, in furthering their spiritual and eternal happiness, and to their bodies, in relieving all that needed him; teaching us thereby that heavenly art of promoting the welfare of each other* ^r. A compassionate affection, and tender-heartedness towards all in their afflictions, and a readiness to bring them ease, is particularly exemplified to us in our Lord's behaviour ^s. When he came nigh to the city Nain, there was a dead man carried out, *the only son of his mother, and she was a widow*, (two moving circumstances;) when our Lord saw her, he *had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not*; and having raised the young man to life, he *delivered him to his mother*. Much such another example we have in Christ, of a good-

^m Luke iv. 16.

ⁿ John v. 1. vii. 10. and x. 22.

^o Matt. xxvi. 39, 42.

^p Luke xxiii. 14, 22.

^q Matt. xvii. 24, 27.

^r Matt. ix. 35. Acts x. 38.

^s Luke vii. 11, &c.

natured, kind, and compassionate inclination, and a real assisting the *distressed*¹. But above all, his love and charity was especially shewn in coming into the world, taking our nature, and dying for us. This example of his, himself urgeth us to follow, though not by any miraculous operations, or in so high a degree; yet to love and do good to each other, after such a manner *as he hath loved us*².

7thly, Humility or lowly-mindedness; he being content to come into the world in a poor state, and as meanly to live in it; being laid in a manger when first born, and esteemed afterwards no better than the son of a poor carpenter³. This humble and lowly disposition is at all times recommended to us, as a truly Christian one, by the apostles, teaching us to be *clothed with humility, and in lowliness of mind, each esteeming others better than ourselves*; and that upon this principle, *of letting this mind be in us which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, yet made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant*⁴.

8thly, Meekness: in the midst of all the slights, revilings, and slanders of the Pharisees and others, though he could easily have revenged all their affronts, and have commanded *fire from heaven*, as Elias did, and as his disciples would have had him do; yet he still behaved himself gently and mildly, checking his disciples for their haste and passion, telling them, *Ye know not what spirit ye are of*; and declaring, that he was *come to save, and not to destroy*⁵. This heavenly temper he also especially recommends to our *learning of him*, who was, in all his behaviour, so *meek, and lowly, and gentle* himself⁶.

9thly, Obedience to parents: before he manifested himself to be the Son of God, he was *subject* to his supposed father Joseph, and Mary his mother after the flesh⁷.

10thly, Contempt of this world, its vain profits and pleasures, in comparison with the next. This temper in Christ was a great stumbling-block or offence to the Jews, who

¹ Mark viii. 1—10.

² John xiii. 34, 35.

³ Mark vi. 3. and Luke ii. 7.

⁴ 1 Pet. v. 5. Phil. ii. 3, 5, 6, 7.

⁵ Luke ix. 54, 55, 56.

⁶ Matt. xi. 29.

⁷ Luke ii. 51.

expected the Messiah to appear with all the pomp and power of a great prince, and to procure for them, together with himself, the enjoyment of all temporal satisfactions and prosperity; whereas he accepted indeed the assistance of those who *ministered unto him* the necessaries of life where he abode; and that was all the share he had of this world for himself and his disciples; calling upon us, in like manner, to come *after him, and deny ourselves* ^c.

11thly, Forgiving enemies, and being willing to be reconciled to them, and do them good: so Christ behaved himself towards his enemies, and prayed for them too: ^d *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

12thly, Patient suffering for well-doing: he often met with no better return, for all his acts of love to men's souls and bodies, than reproach and contempt, being charged with having assistance from *the devil*, in the mighty works he wrought, and with being a *friend*, or *favourer of sinners* ^e; and at last was rejected by the multitude, (who preferred a thief and murderer before him ^f;) and then affronted, and derided, scourged, and crucified ^g; all which he endured with constant patience. To the imitation of which our heavenly pattern, in doing well, and suffering for it, his apostle tells us, *we are called, that we should follow his steps* ^h.

Lastly, Suffering wrongfully for a good conscience, and righteousness' sake. When he knew the Jews' intention to destroy him, he refused not to bear witness to the truth, *viz.* that he was *the Son of God*, and the Messiah; though he also knew that confession was what they waited for, in order to pronounce him *guilty of blasphemy*, and consequently of *death* ⁱ; teaching us hereby, that whenever the Divine Providence shall put us to such a trial, we also do, as our Lord and Master did, *witness a good confession*, and persevere in the truth: and thereby *take up our cross and follow him*, as

^c Matt. xvi. 24. ^d Luke xxiii. 34. ^e Matt. ix. 34. and xi. 19. ^f Luke xxiii. 18, 19. and John xviii. 40. ^g Matt. xxvii. 26, &c. ^h 1 Pet. ii. 19, 20, 21. ⁱ Matt. xxvi. 63, &c. (as he afterwards did the same before Pilate, John xviii. 30—38.)

he calls upon us to do ^k, that so one day we may also follow him to his glory.

Thus our Lord hath given an example of holy living : and it is our duty to imitate him, otherwise how are we his disciples, or followers, that is, Christians ! to which character, a bare profession of his religion, without following him in practice, cannot entitle us. And how honourable is it to do as the glorious Son of God did ! What satisfaction and comfort must it be to feel in ourselves such a temper as Christ had, to be employed as he was, to spend our life in such a manner as the blessed Jesus did his ! And, as a farther encouragement, to be sure we are *in the right*, and do *walk in the narrow path*, when we follow Christ's footsteps, in whom the Father was always well pleased ! So great reason had St. Paul to instruct every member of the Christian church ^l to *put on*, or imitate, *the Lord Jesus Christ* ; and St. John ^m, *He that saith he abideth in him, (Jesus Christ,) ought himself to walk even as he walked.*

Thus far we have considered the chief contents of the Gospel ; namely, that it gives us an account of *what Christ hath done and suffered for us*, in order to our eternal life and happiness ; what he expects as the condition on our parts ; and also, that it contains the example he hath given us of the performance of such condition, by a true Christian life.

CHAP. VII.

Practical Observations on the Gospels.

FOR the more profitable reading the books of the New Testament, it may be convenient to add some practical observations at the end of the account given of each of those books : these observations are such as tend to advance piety, and to prevent some mistakes which are dangerous and pernicious. As to the four Gospels, the observations are these following.

^k Matt. xvi. 24.

^l Rom. xiii. 14.

^m 1 John ii. 6.

First, As we read any part of the Gospel, we cannot but observe what a vein of love and kindness runs through all our Saviour's words and actions, both in respect to the souls and bodies of mankind: for instance, how kindly did he invite all that were heavy laden with the burden of their sins, or of their sufferings, to come unto him for ease and comfort! How forward was he, in his travels up and down, to heal diseases, to restore sight to the blind, and feet to the lame, *going about, and doing good!* How patient, in bearing with the sottishness and unbelief of his disciples, with the malice of the Pharisees, and ignorance of the people! With how passionate an affection did he pray for his disciples, and for all that should believe on him through their words^a! How full of love was he even to his crucifiers, praying his Father to *forgive them*, and even making an excuse for them, that *they knew not what they did!* The very miracles which he wrought to prove his commission, and to evidence that he was the promised Messiah, were such as might shew not only power, but goodness and love; by such deeds as were most useful and beneficial to men: it might have convinced the world of his power, if he had caused a mountain to move from one place to another; but that would not have given them such instances of his love and goodness, as healing their sick, casting out devils, and raising their dead to life: and although he was often reviled and affronted, yet to manifest himself to be the Saviour, not the destroyer of mankind, he cured all manner of diseases, and raised the dead; but never inflicted any disease, nor took away the life of any man.

Once more; Christ's forbearance of the Jews, for near forty years after he forewarned them of the dreadful judgments which hung over their heads, is not the least instance of his endearing goodness and love, in deferring their destruction so long, and sending them his apostles and teachers, and adding wonderful signs from heaven, foreshewing what was about to befall them, unless they repented. These and many other instances we may observe of our Saviour's love and tenderness, and good-will.

^a John xvii. 9, &c.

Secondly, That God chose such a method of being reconciled to sinners, as withal might vindicate the honour of his laws, and make us sensible of the evil and danger of sin, and of his love and goodness. The honour of his laws is vindicated, and the evil and danger of sin appears in that it was not to be forgiven without some sacrifice and expiation made for it; and we are made sensible of the infinite love and goodness of God, when we find that he *spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us*, to be our Saviour.

Thirdly, When we read in the Gospel the history of our redemption, in Christ's life and death, resurrection and ascension, and sending down the Holy Ghost, we may see how much was to be done, before we could be capable of salvation. Therefore seriously ask yourself, What will become of me? *How shall I escape, if I neglect so great salvation?*

Fourthly, We find in the Gospel, that it is in vain to hope in Christ as our Saviour, unless we also take him for our Lord and King, by *avoiding* what he hath forbidden, and heartily and sincerely *observing* the duties he hath taught, by his precepts and example. For it is evident, that (as God is a God of holiness, as well as mercy) one design of Christ's coming into the world was to suppress all sin and vice; such as injustice, intemperance, uncleanness, profaneness, and such like; and also other degrees of impurity, which may not be so visible to the world, and yet as opposite to holiness; such as haughtiness and pride, passion, envy, and malice, ambition, covetousness, desire of revenge, &c. and on the other hand, to make men religious and virtuous, in the practice of piety and devotion, humility, patience, and meekness, sobriety, chastity, truth, justice, love, and charity, whereby we may *adorn* that excellent religion we profess, may *imitate*, and become the more like our heavenly Father; and so *be the more in his favour* for the present^b; and be *disposed for the relish* of those pure and spiritual pleasures, that are to be in heaven hereafter.

This appears from the whole scope of the New Testament; in particular from our Saviour's first sermon^c, and his other

^b See Just. Martyr. Apol. 1. §. 10. ad initium. ^c Matt. v. vi. vii.

instructions, which have been largely spoken of before ; and also in that discourse^d, where he assures all those, who can be *the branches of the true vine*, that they must be careful how they *bear fruit*, and *keep his commandments*, as ever they hope to *abide in his love*. The same doctrine the apostles took care to settle on the hearts of the new converts to Christianity : thus St. Paul^e instructed them in this design of Christianity ; *The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us how to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts ; and on the other hand, to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world ; and then we may with comfort look for the glorious appearing of our Saviour ; forasmuch as he gave himself for us, yet not only to atone for the guilt, but also to prevent the practice of sin, and to engage men in an holy and religious conversation, that he might purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works ; and those who neglect the performance of this condition of salvation, or delay it so long as that they have neither due time nor ability to perform it, can have no other foundation for their hope than the uncovenanted mercies of God ; and presume as unreasonably in regard to their everlasting concerns, as one that should slight all the methods for securing of his temporal estate, by the present settled laws, and wholly rely upon other laws to be made for the future, to confirm his title, which yet may never be enacted.*

There are indeed promises, in the New Testament, of acceptance on condition of *repentance, and sorrow for sin* : but, 1st, many of these promises respected those who were newly called to the Christian religion, *viz.* the Jews and Heathens, as we shall further see in the Acts of the Apostles. These were to be assured, that their former sins would not exclude them from the new covenant of grace, made with mankind in Christ Jesus, on condition they did repent of them, and forsake them ; and no doubt, such of them who departed this life, as far as they were baptized into Christ's religion, upon their sorrow for sins committed, and renouncing them, and a

^d John xv. 1, &c.

^e Titus ii. 11, 12, 13, 14.

sincere purpose of obeying the Gospel for the future, were entitled to the benefits thereof; (as the labourer was rewarded, in the parable of the vineyard, who was not hired till the latter end of the day.) Hence St. Paul places the doctrine of *repentance from dead works, and faith towards God*, among the first principles of the Christian religion^f. But, 2dly, As for us, who are called into the vineyard at the beginning of the day, who by baptism are so early admitted to be the members of Christ's church, and make constant profession of the Christian religion, we are required to labour, to live according to our profession, and that is, to renounce our sins, and to bring forth good fruit in all holy and godly conversation.

Thus much is evident from the Epistles of St. Paul especially, wherein he informs the first Christians, that they are now to be *dead to sin*, to *put off the old man*, and to *put on the new man*; that is, constantly to watch over themselves, and to resist the temptations to their former sins, and practise the duties of Christianity. They that hope otherwise, must believe, that God sent his Son to give us an example of an holy life, and to teach the practice of it, as we have seen, and yet that it will not signify much to those who rely on his merits, whether that example or practice be followed or no, or be rendered altogether vain.

As for the promises of pardon for sins committed, or omissions of duty, made to professed Christians, on their *repentance*, the great thing to be enquired into is, whether that repentance be sincere or no, *viz.* such as is suitable to the tenor of the Gospel; which consists in a present *sorrow*, and inward *change* of the disposition; and not only so, but a hearty *reformation*; and that whilst opportunity serves, and before the season and day is over. Such a penitent may comfort and encourage himself with that of the Apostle^g, *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus*

^f Heb. vi. 1. Hence in the primitive church, the Catechumens, (or Catechizati,) on their faith and repentance, even though not baptized when prevented by death, were esteemed and be entitled to the merits of Christ. Firmiliani Epist. ad Cyprianum, epist. 75. prope finem, edit. Oxon. Augustinus de Baptismo, l. iv. c. 22.

^g 1 John ii. 1, 2.

Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins.

Once more; it may be added here, that indeed in the New Testament divers promises are made to some *particular* graces, or pious actions: as that *God is well pleased with the sacrifice of doing good*^h; that we thereby are *laying up in store for ourselves a good foundation against the time to come*ⁱ: that we are to *love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God*^k: and that *hope maketh not ashamed*^l; and such like. But then, what we are to understand hereby is this; that indeed such a single grace, or good action, does in a peculiar manner recommend us to God, yet is not alone effectual for salvation, unless in conjunction with other parts of Christian piety. This ought to be seriously considered; for St. James fully shews^m, that to fail, or *offend*, knowingly or wilfully, even *in one point*, is to be *guilty of all*; and consequently, one grace, or holy action, cannot make reparation for a wilful omission or neglect in other branches of our duty, much less for an indulgence in any allowed sinful course. So that, in short, doing good, and loving our neighbour, &c. are duties very acceptable to God, and have a particular promise of pardon for past sins annexed to the performance of them, and shall be particularly regarded at the last dayⁿ, which certainly is a vast encouragement. But they are not to be depended on singly by themselves, with a neglect of other parts of Christian behaviour: but where there is in general a *conversation as it becometh the Gospel of Christ*, or a sincere, true *repentance and reformation*, charity, and loving others, as being godlike qualities, have especial promises of acceptance, and of reward in heaven.

Further: The holy Gospel teaches us, that it is not sufficient that we abstain from debauchery and vices; such as adultery, drunkenness, lying, cheating, and such like; unless we also perform the duties which the Gospel requires: for, besides what hath been already mentioned, Christ hath not only declared against the commission of sins, but hath also

^h Heb. xiii. 12.

ⁱ 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19.

^k 1 John iv.

^l Rom. v. 5.

^m James ii. 10.

ⁿ Matt. xxv. 14, &c.

forewarned us of the danger of the omission of duties ; and observes to us, that not only *the tree which bringeth forth evil* or hurtful fruit, but that which *bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire*^o. And in the parable of the talents, he is that *wicked servant*, to be *cast into outer darkness*, not who abused his Lord's talent, for he hid it in the earth ; but who did not use and improve it, was *slothful and unprofitable*^p. And in the account he gives us of the day of judgment, he shews^q, that those who neglect the works of mercy and charity, shall be sentenced to *everlasting fire*. Lastly, the Gospel not only requires the performance of virtuous *actions*, but likewise a watchfulness over the *inward motions* of the heart^r.

Here it may be requisite to mention the grand principles, or springs of piety, (both in mind and practice,) set forth in the Gospel ; *viz.* the *love and fear of God*^s, and *the contempt of the world*^t. The *love of God*, as he is the chiefest good in himself, and the fountain of all the good which we do, or can enjoy, either in this life, or in the life to come : and the *fear of God*, who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. This fearing of God is very consistent with our loving him ; *viz.* as a dutiful son loves and reverences his parent, and, at the same time, fears to offend him, lest he lose his favour, and incur his displeasure.

As for *the world* ; what is to be expected from it, beyond the present necessities of life ? Not entire satisfaction ; for the experience of mankind proves the contrary, and forces a confession, one time or other, that all therein is vanity. Neither can lands, or money, remove trouble of mind, or infirmity of body : and at best, how short and uncertain are worldly treasures and felicities ! So that nothing would more tend to advance religion, according to the principles laid down in the Gospel, than a serious contemplation on the perfections and benevolence of God, to induce us to love and please him ; and on his justice and power, whereby we may be afraid to offend him ; as also on the insufficiency and uncertainty of

^o Matt. vii.^p Matt. xxv.^q Matt. xxv. 41, 42, &c.^r Luke vi. 45.^s Matt. xxii. 37. and x. 28.^t Luke xii. 15—22. Matt. xvi. 24—27.

worldly satisfactions to wean us from them, and to make us *set our affections on things above.*

Fifthly, Every person, in order to salvation by Christ, ought not only to believe the Gospel, renounce the sins forbidden, and observe the duties contained in it; but he must also become an outward member of Christ's church, make profession of the Christian religion, and serve God in the public assemblies^u, and be partaker of the holy sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; which Christ hath ordained to derive the inward and spiritual grace unto us, and to which he hath annexed the conveyance thereof; *viz.* of that remission of sins, and that reconciliation which he purchased by his death and sufferings, in that he hath made the holy sacraments the ordinary means whereby to convey an interest in his merits unto us; though not by any power in those means themselves, yet by virtue of his institution and appointment, and by the power of his Holy Spirit, moving and working in and by those means, upon all such as have suitable dispositions, and use them aright: as appears in respect to both the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper^x. So that although it be one design of the Gospel, to teach men not to place religion chiefly in the performance of outward rites, (such as Moses taught the Jews,) but in the purity of the heart, and a holy life; worshipping the Father *in spirit and truth*; yet Christ hath thought fit to ordain a few plain and visible rites, (as Baptism and the Lord's Supper,) whereby men should be admitted into the visible society of his church, and become partakers of the spiritual benefits thereof; which therefore by no means are to be neglected, but reverently, devoutly, and thankfully to be used.

Nor ought it to be pretended, that because the Gospel requires inward purity, therefore the external ordinances were only *for a season*, and the obligation to them now ceases; forasmuch as we find nothing in Scripture concerning their being only temporary, and there is rather more reason for the

^u Matt. xviii. 20. compared with Acts ii. 1. Heb. x. 25. ^x Matt. xxviii. 19. John iii. 5. Matt. xxvi. 26, &c. compared with Acts ii. 41, 42. 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13. and x. 16, 17.

continuance of them, than at their first institution, when the miraculous and sanctifying graces of the Spirit were so evident and common. So that, without being a visible member of the church of Christ, and making open profession of Christianity, frequenting the public assemblies, and partaking of the holy sacraments, the Gospel hath not promised us salvation by Christ. Where indeed these things are not in our power, there we may reasonably hope God will accept the will and resolution; for he hath not bound up himself to his own ordinances; but hath made them absolutely necessary as to us, when it is possible for us to observe them.

This ought to be well considered by all such who content themselves with a belief of the Gospel, and, it may be, a moral conversation, but wilfully neglect the forementioned ordinances of Christ.

Sixthly, Every true Christian must be ready and resolved beforehand rather to suffer, than disown Christ and his Gospel; or do, or consent to any thing against the rules thereof; since our Lord declares^y, *If any man will come after me, or be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*

Seventhly, We may do well sometimes to reflect on the reasonableness and perfection of the religion which Christ hath established^z; such as in the first place agrees with the reason of mankind; which teaches us to reverence and love God, the Author of our being, and of all our enjoyments, and to express our inward reverence and love of him by outward worship and adoration, to testify our dependence on him by prayers, and also to acknowledge our obligations to him by praises and thanksgivings. The Christian religion does also teach us the best methods for the government of ourselves, in order to our temporal ease, health, and happiness, by purity, chastity, moderation, and temperance; the contrary vices whereto are unnatural, unreasonable, and unhealthful; and likewise Christianity is available to establish true holiness, by

^y Matt. xvi. 24. ^z This is at large illustrated by Dr. Hammond, in his Reasonableness of the Christian Religion, chap. iv. and Archbishop Tillotson's Sermon. V. vol. i. in Phil. verse 8.

teaching us how to purify our souls from the dross and filth of sensual delights, that provoke to covetousness, intemperance, and lust ; which indispose a man for the contemplation of things spiritual and divine. Further, the religion which Christ hath taught the world does also tend to the peace and happiness of human society ; than which end nothing can be devised more proper, by enjoining love one to another, meekness, justice, and charity. *Lastly*, This religion furnishes us with the best motives to patience and contentedness, under the evils and afflictions of this life, by propounding to us the example of the Son of God, and the glory and reward with which we shall be recompensed for ever.

Nor does the practice of the Christian religion deprive us of our temporal interests and satisfactions ; it does not oblige us to resist our natural appetites, but the corruptions of them : every man may enjoy the comforts of this life, provided he does not, for the sake thereof, unqualify himself for those of the life to come ; which being so abundantly more excellent and eternal, it is his greatest interest, as well as happiness, to secure, as it would prove his greatest unhappiness to forfeit, them ; for what is so momentary and uncertain in this world ! O how *excellent is the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord !* And how happy are we, and shall be, if we *do those things which we know*, so much tending to our present, future, and eternal good !

Eighthly, One branch of the new covenant, under the Gospel dispensation, is the blessed ^z operation of the Holy Spirit ; which being forfeited by our first parents' transgression, was graciously renewed by the promise of the Messiah, the *seed of the woman* ; and afforded to the prophets, and other holy persons under the legal dispensation, as it is now under the Gospel, by which Spirit we are *regenerate*, or *born again of water and of the Spirit*^a. This is explained by the apostle^b, *viz.* that Christ hath *saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit* ; the sum of which is, that sin having corrupted our nature, whereby our wills and affections

^z Dr. Clagget has, among others, largely treated of this subject in his *Operations of the Holy Spirit*. ^a John iii. 5. ^b Tit. iii. 5.

are inclined to evil, ever since the fall of our first parents, we are therefore said to be *born in sin*, and to become the *children of wrath*, or subject to the wrath of God : but in our baptism, by virtue of Christ's institution, and the power and influence of the Holy Spirit, (which always accompanies his ordinances,) we are entered into a state of regeneration, or are spiritually new-born, are taken into covenant with God, and have an interest in the sanctifying graces of his Spirit, in order to holiness and salvation. Now the gifts and operations of the Spirit, expressed in Scripture, are twofold ; the one sort *miraculous*, and peculiar to the apostles and first Christians ; such as speaking with new tongues, healing diseases, interpreting the types and prophecies of the Old Testament, &c. for the planting and propagating the Gospel at the beginning, as we shall see afterwards : the other spiritual gifts are such as are *to continue* in the church. The former, we find by experience, are ceased ; and therefore it is a gross and dangerous mistake in such, who confound those two sorts of gifts, and support their pretences to the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, by promises peculiar to the apostles and first Christians. As for the latter sort of spiritual gifts and assistances, which are to continue in the church, these are promised on our prayers^c, and do both confirm a person in the state of regeneration or grace, and keep him so, except he *resist* and *quench* the Spirit, that is, either by *refusing* to do that good to which he finds himself to be strongly moved by his inward workings and persuasions ; or *proceeding presumptuously* in any evil course, notwithstanding the checks and reproofs he feels within him.

The distinct peculiar *manner*, how the Spirit worketh in us, is not revealed, and therefore is not to be known by us ; some have endeavoured to explain it, by God's raising such and such ideas in our brains, or making^d such impressions on our minds ; for we cannot conceive him to have less power than he hath given to man, who can utter his mind in such manner, as to be apprehended by another ; so God, who is a Spirit, can speak to the spirits and minds of men, as men can to the ear :

^c Luke xi. 13.

^d See the first part, chap. i. §. 4. concerning inspiration in general, towards the end of that section.

but this we may be sure of, that his Spirit worketh in us in a way suitable to that reasonable nature which God hath given us, and to those faculties of the mind, and that freedom of choice, with which he hath endued us, as by inclining, convincing, persuading, &c. which is the method the same Spirit hath used, as we find in Scripture, *viz.* by arguments and motives to convince and persuade. There may be those who are more suddenly and powerfully wrought upon than others; and they may know when and where they perceived a very extraordinary and strong impression on their minds; which they may, not without just cause, believe to be the operation of the Spirit of God in their hearts: but, doubtless, there are many, who, by means of a happy education, in conjunction with the grace and Spirit of God, and an early religious conversation, with a constant progress therein, though they cannot point out the time and place of any such particular extraordinary impression on their minds, yet are truly regenerate, and led by the Spirit, and frequently feel the gracious influences thereof. The effects of a new birth, and the operations of the Spirit, are discerned by the holy dispositions wrought thereby on our minds: for he *worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure*^e. So we are said to be *led by the Spirit of God*^f. Nay, that we are *the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in us*^g; that is, as the Shechinah, or glory and bright shining, under the Jewish state, dwelt or resided in the temple of the Jews, as a testimony of God's presence with them to protect and govern them. But then we are to guard against enthusiasm; that is, the vain pretence of too many, who mistake the idle imaginations of their own brains for the dictates of the Spirit: nevertheless, their false notions of the Spirit ought not to discountenance our apprehensions of the true ones, no more than we should allow that there is no sound principle of law or physic, because of so many pretenders or quacks in both.

The *true mark*, whereby we may distinguish our own vain imaginations, or the suggestions of the devil from the dictates of the Holy Spirit, (in which we are to be careful,) is the tend-

^e Phil. ii. 13.

^f Rom. xviii. 14.

^g 1 Cor. iii. 16.

ency of the motion or suggestion in our minds, *viz.* that it does not clash with any ordinance, or appointment prescribed in the holy Scriptures, which has been revealed by the same Spirit; but is exactly conformable thereunto, both as to our profession and practice, and prompts and encourages us to the promoting of God's glory, and the discharge of our duties, or upbraids us with the contrary; and also, at the same time, works in our hearts humility in respect to ourselves, and charity for others; that in *lowliness of mind, we may esteem others better than ourselves*; and checks all spiritual pride, self-conceit, and disobedience to government in church or state; making us *endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*. By these marks we may prove our inward motions: but without such examination and proof, too many wofully mistake the foolish and impious suggestions in their own minds, (too often the work of the devil,) for the true light and guiding of the Spirit of God.

The secret and gracious motions of the Holy Spirit in our minds are to be diligently attended to; being sometimes vouchsafed for the enlightening our understanding of the holy Scriptures, and our Christian privileges and duties, and for our encouragement therein^b; at other times, for supporting and filling our hearts with contentment, and cheerfulness in troubleⁱ. One while checking us for any vice or neglect^k; at another time, creating in us a secret pleasure and satisfaction on our performance of an holy duty^l, raising more or less inward fervour, and spiritual joy in prayer^m, and frequently solacing the soul with a sense of God's favour, and with a lively hope of future salvationⁿ. And as we are to observe and rejoice in those happy operations of the Holy Spirit, (as knowing, that the soul can no more live the life of righteousness without them, than the body can live naturally without food and clothing,) so we are to be on our parts careful that we may continue to enjoy them: but that we are not like to do, if we suffer the love of this world to seize our affections; for then we shall either be so drawn away with alluring sinful pleasures,

^b Eph. i. 17, 18. ^l 1 Cor. ii. 14.

ⁱ 2 Cor. i. 3, 4, 5.

^k Gal. v. 16.

^l Psal. xl. 8.

^m Eph. vi. 18.

ⁿ Rom. v. 5. and viii. 16, 17. Psal. li. 12.

or hurried with earthly affairs, that we shall forfeit those divine comforts and succours, and drive the Spirit from us: but the person, whom God takes into his special care, is he who keeps himself *disentangled from the snares of the world, and burns with desire after the love of the Lord*; and with a stedfast faith, and lively hope, lives in expectance of the heavenly treasures. To this purpose, the ancient author cited in the margin, and lately translated into our own language^o, is worth the perusal of every pious person; by the frequent reading of, and meditation thereon, he will soon find himself to be of that devout father's mind; *viz.* (in his own words,) "The promises made to us Christians are great, and beyond expression; insomuch, that all the glory and beauty of heaven and earth, with all the remaining furniture and variety, riches, splendour, and delight, of the visible creation, bear no proportion to the faith and treasure of one single soul." And therefore, since our heavenly Father has graciously promised the sanctifying gifts of *the Holy Spirit to them that ask him*, we shall do well to ask the same, by the frequent use of that excellent Collect of our Church; *O Lord, from whom all good things do come, grant to us thy humble servants, that by thy holy inspiration we may think those things that be good, and by thy merciful guidance may perform the same, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen*^p.

Ninthly, That severe sentence, that *the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven*, was occasioned by the blasphemy of the Pharisees, affirming, that Christ wrought his miracles by *the prince of the devils*^q. Whereupon Christ declared^r, that although their blasphemous words against him might be forgiven, yet whosoever should blaspheme the Holy Ghost, (whose power now appeared by the works they saw, and who was to be sent down amongst them in a more ample manner afterward,) which was the last dispensation that God would vouchsafe for their conviction, and affirm the wonderful operations, to be wrought by the apostles and others, through the assistance of the divine Spirit, in testimony of Christ, to

^o The Spiritual Homilies of Macarius the Egyptian.

^p Fifth Sunday after

Easter. ^q Matt. xii. 24. ^r Ver. 31.

be the work of an evil spirit, thereby opposing and reproaching the goodness and power of the Spirit of God in effecting them, this sin should not be forgiven: so that no one who believes in Jesus Christ can be guilty of this sin, but he who blasphemously affirms, that the miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles, after Christ's ascension into heaven, and the wonderful works wrought in testimony of Christ's being the Messiah and Saviour, were the work of the devil; and thereupon rejects the Christian religion, and the evidence thereof in the holy Scriptures; such resist their last remedy^s, and oppose the best and utmost means of their conviction; because such miraculous works are the utmost evidence that can be given to the truth of any religion, and, as hath been said, is the last dispensation which God vouchsafes for conviction.

Tenthly, As it is the common right of all societies to censure and exclude any disorderly member from the common privileges, without which fundamental power they cannot subsist; and as in the Jewish church there was the exercise of spiritual censures, to terrify evil-doers, prevent infection by evil examples, and to bring offenders to amendment; and thereby to maintain the credit and power of religion, by excommunication, or exclusion from sacred offices^t; so it was the universal sense of the ancients^u, agreeable to their constant practice, from the beginning of Christianity, that Christ committed unto the apostles, and in them to the bishops and pastors of the church, to the end of the world, an authority to establish a church; and for the government thereof, a power of exercising church-discipline, or of *binding and loosing*, of excommunication and absolution, for the ends and purposes above mentioned, (there being like to be always the same reason for discipline;) and also that Christ assured the same to them, by that sacred

^s Camero inter criticos sacros ad loc. Alloquitur dominus Pharisæos, qui patris œconomiam, quæ ante Christi adventum vigeat, inæper habuerunt; suam item blasphemantes spreverant. Ait ergo, licet œconomias illas, quamdiu duravere, contempserint; esse tamen spem veniæ, sub tertiam, quæ spiritui sancto tribuitur; sancti vero spiritus œconomiam si prosequantur odio, sublatam esse omnem veniæ spem, quia quarta œconomia minime expectari debeat. ^t John ix. 22. ^u Hammond's Power of the Keys, chap. 4. Cave's Primitive Christianity, part iii. chap. 5.

symbol from his own mouth^x; *He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained*; and that on this principle, that as God himself is the Author of reconciliation, so he hath appointed his ministers to confirm the same as stewards commissioned by him; “as when a king sends governors over provinces, he gives them power of imprisoning and releasing;” according to the similitude of one of the ancients^y. We may add here the remark of an eminent prelate of our Church to this purpose; “That act of ministry is not ineffectual, which God hath promised shall be ratified in heaven; and that authority is not contemptible, which the holy Jesus conveyed by breathing upon his church the Holy Ghost^z.”

Eleventhly, The pretence of the Papists, that the Bishop of Rome, the Pope, as being the successor of St. Peter, is the visible head of the whole Christian church on earth, and that whatsoever body of Christians do not submit to him as such, are no members of the Catholic church, is ill founded on Matt. xvi. 18, 19. *Thou art Peter, that is, a stone or rock, (for so the name signifies,) and upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, &c.*^a

For this text does not give to Peter any peculiar authority over the rest of the apostles, because they were all of them rocks and foundations of the church, and had all the same commission given them, and the same power of *feeding*, or teaching the church, as pastors of it, *of binding and loosing, of remitting and retaining sins*, or the power of the keys; as the texts below fully shew^b. And therefore, their pretence that the apostles were made foundations of the church in a different manner, that is, St. Peter is the ordinary pastor, and

^x John xx. 22, 23. ^y Chrysost. in Joh. xx. 23. ^z Bishop Taylor's Life of Christ, part iii. and §. 16. Compare Dr. Wells's Paraphrase on 1 Cor. v. And it ought not to be pleaded, that the power of remission of sins in the apostles was extraordinary, and for a time, as was that of miracles; because the church stands as much in need of it now, as in their days. ^a Catech. ad Parochos, pars i. in Artic. Symbol. 9. ^b Eph. ii. 20. Rev. xxi. 14. Matt. xxviii. 16, &c. John xx. 23.

the rest only as ambassadors, is contrary to Scripture; and whatsoever our Saviour intended by that figurative expression, this is certain, that the *rock*, or real foundation, on which the Christian church is built, or the *chief corner stone*, is, according to St. Peter's confession, *Jesus Christ*^c. But the first person instrumental in building on this foundation was St. Peter, first among the Jews^d, then among the Gentiles^e. This matter of fact may explain^f our Saviour's promise to Peter, even supposing he means, by *this rock*, the person of Peter; but no superiority or power, or any jurisdiction over the rest of the apostles, or the whole Christian church, can be hence inferred; much less the succession of the Bishops of Rome in such an authority, any more than of those of Antioch, or any other place where St. Peter preached or resided.

It is also evident, that the other apostles did not, either from these words of Christ to Peter, or from any other cause, acknowledge any superior power in St. Peter; but acted without difference of respect or regard to him, more than to each other; as appears particularly in the case concerning the Gentile converts' obligation to the Mosaical law^g. So far were the Christians from appealing to St. Peter, as the judge in such cases, that they sent to the *apostles and elders* in general^h, among whom the case was discussed, and at length determined; not by Peter, but James; *Wherefore my sentence is, &c.*ⁱ upon which it pleased (not Peter only, or as principal, but) *the apostles and elders, to send chosen men to Antioch*, with their resolution^k. Peter is indeed called the *first*, in reckoning up the twelve apostles^l; that is, in order, not dignity, or power: and the natural fervour and eagerness of his temper occasioned that his forwardness in speaking^m. Lastly, The plain matter of fact is this: the supremacy of the Pope, which the Church of Rome now challenges, was unknown for six hundred years,

^c Eph. ii. 20. which is the rock many of the ancient fathers mean. Forbesius Instructions, Hist. Theol. l. xv. c. 7, 8, 9. ^d Acts ii. 14, 38, 41. ^e Acts x. 44, &c. ^f Casaubon. Exercit. 15. ann. 33. num. 17. §. 14. p. 366, &c. Camera-rius apud Pool. Hammond and Whitby in Matt. xvi. 18. ^g Acts xv. ^h Ver. 2. ⁱ Ver. 19. ^k Ver. 22. ^l Matt. x. 2. ^m Casaubon, Exercit. 16. ann. 34. num. 64. §. 61. p. 519.

and then by degrees obtained in the Western church, not on the account of Christ's appointment, but the dignity of the church, and Bishop of Rome, which was the imperial cityⁿ.

Twelfthly, Those unhappy persons, who, being loth to quit their sinful pleasures, would fain comfort themselves, that so good a God will not punish them for ever for the sins of a short time, do befool and deceive themselves, in hoping to avoid what God has so solemnly threatened, and Christ has so mercifully forewarned them of, (as well as died to hinder,) the *going away into everlasting punishment*^o. Which is opposed there to the *life eternal*^p of the righteous; and therefore is to be understood to be as truly eternal, the one as the other; and the threatening is altogether as positive as the promise^q.

As for proportioning the time of punishment with that of the commission of the fact, what law is there which does not consider the nature and heinousness of the fact, not the longer or shorter space in which it was committed? God offers to our choice the joys of heaven, and that on condition of a gracious yoke, and a reasonable service; in which he is pleased to afford the assistance of his Spirit, and word, and sacraments; and *the everlasting fire was prepared for the devil and his angels*. So that if, after all means of salvation being afforded, any one should wilfully choose the devil's work, and unhappy share, the fault is in himself. As one short act of lust often ruins a man's health for his whole life, which is his *ever* in this world; and yet he cannot blame God for it, or expect he should deliver him by a miracle. Nor are we to separate the divine attributes of mercy and justice. In a word; since God has promised everlasting happiness on condition of our obedience, and has threatened everlasting punishment for the want of it; it seems to be his intention, that we should believe them both to be alike everlasting; and that we should make this use of the promise and threatening, *viz.* to

ⁿ Irenæus, l. iii. c. 3. et Not. Grabii ibid. Bishop Stillingfleet's Vindication of Archbishop Laud, part ii. ch. 6. §. 11, 12. Dr. Cave's Government of the Ancient Church, and Dr. Geddes's Tracts, vol. ii. ^o Matt. xxv. 46. P Εἰς κόλασιν αἰώνιον, οὐκ ἐξέρχεται ἔτι.
^q Just. Martyr. Apol. 1. §. 12. et Trypho, edit. Jebb. p. 131.

consider, and endeavour how to escape the punishment, and enjoy the happiness. *Which God grant.*

Thus much for the holy Gospels.

CHAP. VIII.

The Acts of the Apostles.

THE next book of the New Testament is the Acts of the Apostles; which gives us an account of propagating the Christian faith and religion up and down the world, after Christ's ascension into heaven, by the apostles and their assistants. This book was also written by ^a St. Luke, the same who was mentioned before to have written one of the Gospels, (which he calls *The former treatise*;) and who was a constant attendant of St. Paul, whose actions he chiefly describes, as being an eye-witness to most of them. This history, from the beginning, was received into the canon of holy Scripture, as ^b appears from some of the most ancient fathers of the Church. For the better understanding this account in the Acts, of the first settlement of Christianity, we may make the following remarks.

First remark. The employment of publishing the Gospel was in itself very difficult and hazardous. The apostles were wont not only to convert persons of all countries and religions, but directly to oppose those opinions and practices, which the whole world, both of Jews and Gentiles, had for many ages been educated in, and with the greatest obstinacy received, and been accustomed to. They were now to cry down the necessity of the ceremonial observations of the Jews, as being only shadows of Christ the substance; and to *change the customs which Moses delivered* to them, and which they and their forefathers for so many generations had received, and were so zealously concerned for ^c. They were also to oppose the Heathens, who were hardened in their errors and debauches,

^a Irenæus, l. iii. cap. 14. Dr. Mill's Prolegom. p. 13, 14. Dr. Whitby's Preface to the Acts, about the end. ^b Ibid. ^c See Acts vi. 13, 14. xxi. 20, 21. and xxii. 22, 23.

and even thought their gods were more honoured by their sensuality ^d. Being thus to contest with the strong prejudices and passions of all sorts of men, they had need of being *endued with power from on high*; as we shall find they were, in the sequel of this history; which, if they had not been well assured of, it is not conceivable they should have attempted to preach the Gospel.

Second remark. At the time of publishing the Gospel, the whole world was drowned in impiety, and fallen into all manner of abominable sins. The heathens were all very sensible of their danger on this account: witness the sacrifices, wherewith they hoped to have appeased their angry deities. The Jews had sacrifices for sins of ignorance, and smaller transgressions; but the greater sins, as idolatry, murder, adultery, &c. were punished by death; and there was no provision made in the law to save such sinners ^e. Besides, their legal sacrifices were only types and shadows of some more effectual one that was to come.

This being the state of the world, the apostles had a commission, with full power to invite all into the Christian church; that on condition of faith in Christ, repentance, and reformation for the future, they might be baptized, and made members thereof, and obtain remission of sins, in all cases whatsoever. So ^f, *Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him, all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.* But they were also to declare, that howsoever God was pleased to *wink at the former times of ignorance*; yet *now*, since he *hath given assurance to all men that Christ is the Saviour*, he will be their Judge, in that *he hath raised him from the dead*; he hath, on their peril, *commanded all men every where to repent* ^g.

Third remark. The obstinacy of the Jews, and their unbelief, were very much aggravated after Christ's resurrection, and his mission of the Holy Ghost. Those prejudices, which

^d As in the solemnities of Cybele, Bacchus, Venus, &c. ^e Numb. xxxv. 31.
 Levit. xx. 10. ^f Acts xiii. 38, 39. ^g Chap. xvii. 30, &c.

their whole nation had entertained against his person and doctrine, though very unreasonable, (as hath been shewn ^y before,) were yet an occasion of their unbelief. They knew that their law was at first established by signs and wonders from heaven under Moses; and they expected that the Messiah should be a glorious temporal King, and triumphantly subdue all nations under them; as we have seen before in the Gospels. Now that their law, given by God to their great master Moses, and confirmed by so many signs and wonders, was to give place to another dispensation; that they knew Jesus of Nazareth to be meanly descended and born; and that, instead of glorious triumphs and conquests, and a temporal kingdom, they heard him declare, *his kingdom was not of this world*; and saw him crucified, dead, and buried, whereas they expected their Messiah should *abide for ever*; this made them to be *offended*. But on the other hand, when, besides the miracles Christ himself wrought, in healing the sick, raising the dead, and casting out devils, he was *declared to be the Son of God with power, by his resurrection from the dead*; and when the truth of this was so fully evinced by the wonderful descent of the Holy Ghost on his disciples, enabling them on a sudden to speak all languages, and to do so many wonderful works in his name, and in confirmation of that doctrine; this fully answered their objections, and ought to have removed all their prejudices; by this they might have seen, that *all power was given to him both in heaven and in earth*; that a greater than Moses was here, and that God had *made this same Jesus both Lord and Christ*.

Fourth remark. Divers of the people of the Jews had been, for many years past, dispersed through several countries, and called *the dispersed among the Gentiles*^z, insomuch that there were *Jews in every nation under heaven*^a. And Josephus says^b, “the Jews were a people dispersed over all the world.” These dispersions were first occasioned by the carrying away of the ten tribes into Assyria, whence they never returned;

^y See remarks ii. and iii. on the Gospels aforesaid. ^z John vii. 35. ^a Acts ii. 5, 10. ^b That is, chiefly all countries then in subjection to the Romans, *κατα πασαν την οικουμενην*, de Bello, l. vii. cap. 21.

and after by the captivity of the two other tribes of Judah and Benjamin in Babylon; whence though the generality returned under Cyrus and his successors, yet divers settled there; for, many ages after, the posterity of the Jews remained in Assyria, Parthia, Babylon, &c. ^c A great colony of them were by Alexander planted in his new city, that he built in Egypt ^d, (and which he named Alexandria,) as we have seen before. After Alexander's death, Ptolemy, surnamed Soter, having surprised Jerusalem on a sabbath day, settled another great colony of the Jews in Egypt ^e, particularly in Alexandria; where, in confidence of their fidelity to him, he allowed them great privileges, which, together with the convenience of a fruitful country, allured vast numbers of them to fix in Egypt. Further, the Jews had been dispersed in Syria, the lesser Asia, Greece, Italy, and elsewhere; for Jews, as well as proselytes, are said to come from the several countries mentioned ^f. Many of the latter dispersions might be occasioned, partly through business, and also by the tyrannies of Antiochus, before mentioned; and after by Pompey, and the Roman soldiers.

Now, where the Jews settled in great towns, they were allowed to have their synagogues, or places for their public worship ^g. So that the apostles, and first preachers of the Gospel, (especially St. Paul,) finding some Jews, more or less, in most cities or countries whither they went, they betook themselves to the Jews in the first place, and afterwards to the Gentiles ^h; and thus may the question be answered, which perhaps some raise in reading the New Testament, how the Jews are so often mentioned out of their own country.

Fifth remark. The providence of God is to be observed at this time, in disposing the affairs of the world so, as that the Gospel might be the easier propagated; and that in two

^c Insomuch that Josephus mentions the Jews of his time, "on the other side of Euphrates, and in Adiabena," (which is in Assyria.) Preface to the Wars, and near the end of Agrippa's Speech. Wars, book ii. chap. 16. ^d Idem, Wars, book ii. chap. 21. ^e Idem, Antiq. book xii. chap. 1. ^f Acts ii. 9, 10. see also 1 Pet. i. 1. Acts xi. 19. ^g Acts ix. 2. xiii. 14. and xviii. 24, 26. ^h See Acts xiii. 46. and xviii. 5, 6.

respects; first, by the above-mentioned dispersions of the Jews among the Gentiles, several of the Gentiles became proselytes^l, of which some entirely embraced the Jewish religion, and others were also admitted to the worship of the true God^k, and so by frequenting their synagogues, where the Old Testament was wont to be read and interpreted, they were by degrees acquainted with the holy Scriptures, and the types and prophecies concerning Christ the Messiah: herein they were all much assisted by the translation of the Old Testament from the Hebrew into Greek, called the Septuagint, spoken of before. For the Greek language, in general, and this translation, was much used^l at this time by the dispersed Jews and proselytes; because after the enlargement of the Macedonian or Grecian empire, the Greek language became familiar to the Jews and neighbouring countries: hence the New Testament was written in Greek, and a great many expressions therein are taken from the aforesaid translation of the Septuagint, which was so much in use.

In the second place, the Gospel was more easily propagated, because very many countries were at this time united under one government, that of the Romans; so that there was an universal peace, which opened a way for the apostles, and first preachers of Christianity, with the greater ease and security, to plant the Gospel in the several parts of the world.

Sixth remark. The persecutions which the church of Christ underwent were occasioned chiefly by the unbelieving Jews: their enmity arose in part from the prejudice they had conceived against Christ himself, in respect to the meanness of his outward appearance, his exposing their hypocrisies, and wrong notions^m, and partly out of a mistaken zeal for the law of Moses, which had been established by God with such signs from heaven, and which they presumed was to remain unalterableⁿ; and, lastly, through envy to the Gentiles, that they should be taken into covenant with God, as well as

^l See remark iii. on the Gospels, num. iv. concerning proselytes. ^k Acts ii. 10. and xiii. 43. ^l Grot in Matt. xxvii. 37. Lightfoot's Harmony, sub an. 62. p. 340. ^m For which see remarks ii. iii. on the Gospels. ⁿ For which see what hath been said on the Pentateuch, concerning the ceremonial law.

themselves^o. On these accounts principally, the Jews were not satisfied with having procured the death of Christ, but continued their hatred of, and violent opposition to, the doctrine of Christianity, and the professors of it, especially the Jews, (their own countrymen,) who were believers; whom they persecuted both in Judea, and in other countries, through the assistance or connivance of the Roman power^p.

The Jews pretended that the Christians were *movers of sedition*^q, and had treasonable designs against the empire in making Christ a king; and so did *contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying, that there is another king, one Jesus*^r; because they owned him for the Messiah, and called him Lord, and hoped for a kingdom in heaven^s, (the same they had suggested before against Christ himself^t.) Nay, so far did the malice of the unbelieving Jews proceed, as that, having first ordered that Jesus Christ, and those who believed in him, should be solemnly pronounced accursed in their synagogues^u, they sent from Jerusalem, into all other countries, certain chosen persons, on purpose to spread false and scandalous reports concerning the religion of the Christians, representing them as guilty of atheism, and all manner of impiety, to make them odious to all mankind^v.

Here, by the way, we may take notice, that the Jews expressed the like hatred against the Christians, and oppressed them in the following centuries. The Christians at Smyrna, in their Epistle concerning the martyrdom of Polycarp^w, speaking of the multitude's getting faggots to burn him, they add, "The Jews especially, according to their custom, with all readiness assisting them in it." In Justin Martyr's time, about the year 140, their custom was not only, as hath been said,

^o Of which see at large in the following history of the Acts, concerning the conversion of the Gentiles.

^p See Acts xiv. 2, 19. xvii. 5, 7, 13. xviii. 12. and

xx. 19. Compare Rom. xv. 31. and 1 Thess. ii. 14, 15.

^q Acts xxiv. 5.

^r In

the same manner the Christians were accused about a hundred years afterwards. Just. Martyr. Apol. 1. §. 11. edit. Grab.

^s Acts xvii. 7.

^t Luke xxiii. 2.

^u Just. Mart. Dialog. cum Tryphone, edit. Jebb, p. 50. et 385. (And this accursing of Christ and Christians they continue in their passover feasts. Buxtorf. Synag. c. 18. prope dimidium.)

^v Just. Mart. *ibid.* p. 52. and 317. and note *ibid.*

^w Num. xiii.

solemnly to curse the Christians in their synagogues, but to persecute them more than any other ever attempted to do^x: nay, even in the reign of Constantine, the first Christian emperor, they were wont not only by all means to afflict, but even stone those of their own people who were converted to Christianity; insomuch that the emperor was obliged to make the most severe laws to prevent it, and to threaten them with being burnt to death if they persisted^y; and in the fourth century, they were the chief authors of a most violent persecution of the Christians in Persia, under Sapore, king thereof; which extended to the martyrdom of the Christian bishops and priests, and the demolishing of the churches. This persecution they procured, by falsely suggesting to the Persian king, (who it seems was at variance with the Roman emperor,) that Simeon, the Christian bishop in Persia, held a treasonable correspondence with the emperor, and betrayed the Persian counsels to him^z; and some time after this, under pretence of a Christian church being on fire in the night, they surprised and murdered a great number of Christians in Alexandria^a.

Lastly, St. Jerome, about the same time, informs us, that the Jews were wont three times a day, in all their synagogues, to curse the very name of Christians, under the title of Nazarenes^b. And as this usage of their cursing Christians continues, so they abuse to that purpose^c.

Having made this short digression, (which may somewhat illustrate the opposition which the Jews made against Christianity at the first,) we may observe further, that, besides the spiteful suggestions and malice of the Jews, there were other reasons for the oppositions made against the Christian religion, and the professors and preachers of it, by the Roman powers, and other Gentiles.

1st, These considered their own religion as the religion of their ancestors, and of their country, which their forefathers had a long time professed and practised; and so, instead of

^x Just. Mart. *ibid.* p. 52. ^y Codex de Judæis apud Centuriatores. Centuria iv. p. 850. E. ^z Sozom. Hist. l. ii. cap. 8. ^a Socrates, Hist. l. vii. cap. 13.

^b Hieronym. in Isaiah v. 8. ^c Buxtorf. *ibid.* Psal. lxxix. 25. and lxxix. 6. and Lam. iii. 66.

enquiring into the excellent design of Christianity, and the miracles wrought in confirmation of it, they conceived no small prejudice against it, as a new and strange doctrine, preferring *one Jesus*, that was crucified, to all their gods; and against the publishers of it, as men who *turned the world upside down*. Hence the Christian religion, at its first appearance, was *every where spoken against* by the Gentiles, and accused of atheism and ^d impiety, as tending to undermine the very being and worship of their gods, and to bring their temples and sacrifices into contempt; which had been for so many ages throughout the world so much revered and esteemed ^e. Again, besides the general prejudice the heathens conceived against the Christian religion, as undermining their own, the Roman governors were excited against it, from their jealousy of all innovations in religion, as tending to faction, and *moving of sedition*^f. Now these prejudices of the heathen were manifestly unreasonable: for the Christian religion is the oldest religion in the world; which teaches the worship of the one true God, which the ancient Patriarchs and first planters of the world professed; and is much superior in age to what the most ancient Gentiles could pretend to. And the preachers of this religion were so far from setting up atheism, and contempt of religion, (as they were accused to do, because they preached against the many idols and false gods,) that on the contrary, they pressed the worship of the true God, the Maker of heaven and earth, and propounded the best rewards for so doing; and also enjoined the most peaceable subjection to government. And yet on this mistaken notion of the atheism of Christians, they were frequently accused by the heathens, as being the occasion of all the public calamities that befel the world; as earthquakes, famine, pestilence, &c. The people judging, that the gods took vengeance on the empire, for that neglect of the ancient Pagan worship, which was caused by the doctrines of the Gospel, wherever they took place. This occasioned divers excellent apologies of the most learned among the Christians, in the second and third centuries ^g.

^d Cave's Primitive Christianity, part i. chap. 1. ^e Acts xvii. 6. and xix. 26, 27, 28, 35. ^f Acts xvii. 6. and xxiv. 5. ^g As of Tertullian, Cyprian, Arnobius, &c. See Cave, *ibid.* chap. iii.

2dly, The doctrine of the *resurrection*, as well as of *Christ crucified*, was a great stumbling-block to many of the Gentiles ^h. Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, encountered him : and some said, *What will this babblers say?* other some, *He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods ; because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection.* Upon which St. Paul sets before them the true God, the Maker and Preserver of the world, *in whom we live, and move, and have our being* ⁱ. And further adds, that it ought not to have seemed so strange to them, that he preached Jesus the Saviour, and also the Judge of all men ; seeing God hath given assurance thereof, *in that he hath raised him from the dead* ^k ; and consequently, that by him he both can and will raise others also ; especially since he *hath given such power unto men*, to work so great miracles in confirmation of this doctrine : and why should it be thought so difficult, for the all-seeing and all-powerful God, to gather together and make up the body, out of the same remaining materials, however scattered, altered, or dispersed, (for nothing can be annihilated, or utterly destroyed, but by the same power that created it,) as well as at the first, to form it out of the confused mixture in the dust of the earth !

3dly, The preachers of Christianity taught men to crucify *the lusts of the flesh*, and to abandon their impieties : and no wonder that the vicious heathens (who were *given up to uncleanness* ^l) should endeavour to drive such a religion out of the world, which would oblige them to renounce their darling vices. Once more : the dangers and losses, with other tribulations foretold by the preachers of this doctrine, (such as, *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution,*) increased the Gentiles' aversion to it.

The first emperor that raised a general persecution against the Christians was ^m Nero, a prince of the most brutish manners ; who being either offended with the narrowness of the streets of the city of Rome, or ambitious of being the author of more stately buildings, caused it to be burnt, about thirty years after Christ's death, and then laid it on the Christians ;

^h Acts xvii. 18, 32. ⁱ Ver. 24, 28. ^k Ver. 31. ^l Rom. i. 24. ^m 2 Tim. iii. 12. ⁿ Tacitus, An. l. xv. c. 44. Euseb. Hist. l. ii. c. 25.

who, though innocent, were yet most barbarously persecuted; many being clothed in the skins of wild beasts, and as such torn in pieces by dogs; others crucified, and burnt alive, and that in a sportful manner, to give light in the night time", instead of torches. Under this persecution, St. Peter was crucified, and St. Paul beheaded".

Seventh remark. In the history of the first publishing of the Gospel, there is mention made of *prophets*ⁿ: such were Judas and Silas^o, and such a one, probably, was Ananias, who baptized St. Paul^p. These prophets seem to be also such, who are called *spiritual*, where the terms are both joined together; *If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual.* These were ordained, for the present occasion, immediately by God himself, they being inspired in an extraordinary manner with the spiritual gifts, not only of foretelling things to come, but (which in the New Testament is the proper notion of prophesying) of being *interpreters*; for the interpreting the types and prophecies in the Old Testament that relate to Christ, (as Aaron is said to be a *prophet*, or interpreter to Moses",) thereby to assist the apostles in making converts to Christianity, and to confirm the disciples in the faith; and, for the present, to perform the duties of public ministry in the church, to *speak unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort*, as St. Paul explains the action of him that *prophe-sieth*^v, whereby the present government of the church was a sort of theocracy, or under the immediate direction of the divine Spirit: but, as the numbers of Christians increased, the apostles, inspired by the same Spirit, ordained *elders*, or bishops and presbyters, in the cities where they had preached

ⁿ Sulpitins, sub An. 68. ^o Idem ibid. ^p Dodwell de Jure, c. iii. Hammond in Luke i. 11. and in 1 Cor. xii. As also Acts xi. 27. and xiii. 1. ^q Acts xv. 32. ^r Acts ix. ^s Πνευματικοί. Gal. vi. 1. and 1 Cor. xiv. 37. ^t Bishop Stillingfleet's Sermons, vol. ii. in Matt. vii. 15, 16. who quotes St. Chrysostom in 1 Cor. Hom. 36. that *προφητης* is the same with *ερμηνευτης*; and also other Greek authors, as Themistius, Orat. 1. calls an interpreter of Aristotle, *προφητην Αριστοτελους*. He also observes, that the reason why the name of prophecy came to be restrained to the prediction of things to come was, because future events lying most out of the reach of men's knowledge, the foretelling of those was looked upon as the greatest evidence of divine inspiration. ^u Exod. vii. 1. ^v 1 Cor. xiv. 3.

the Gospel^w. Those extraordinary prophets or teachers aforementioned (who were as so many secondary apostles) were most necessary and useful in the beginning of Christianity, before the settlement of particular churches, and the government thereof, by their proper elders and pastors; and this was after the example of the ancient church of the Jews; in which the ordinary ministerial offices, both of sacrificing and instructing, were proper to the tribe of Levi, and the priestly family; the *priest's lips* were to *keep knowledge*, and the people were to *seek the law at his mouth*^x. But then the prophets had an extraordinary power (of whatever tribe they were) of sacrificing and instructing: thus Samuel offered a burnt-offering^y. And the business of the latter prophets, as well as of the former, was to warn and teach the people. So that this method was most suitable to the great design of converting the Jews, when the Gospel was at first published, that Christ should give *some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ*^z.

CHAP. IX.

Contents of the Acts of the Apostles.

HAVING made these necessary remarks, we may now return to the history contained in the Acts of the Apostles.

In the beginning whereof we read the particular circumstances of our Lord's ascension into heaven; after which the apostles and others (in all *about an hundred and twenty*) assembled together, and celebrated the public worship of God, and chose Matthias to be one of the number of the twelve, in the room of the traitor Judas; which they did by prayer and lots, since the Holy Ghost was not as yet given in an extraordinary manner to direct them: and by this means (forasmuch as when *the lot is cast into the lap, the whole dis-*

^w As Acts xiv. 21, 23. ^x Mal. ii. 7. ^y 1 Sam. vii. Also Elijah, 1 Kings xviii. ^z Eph. iv. 11, 12.

posing thereof is of the Lord^a) the person chosen into the apostleship did not want the characteristic of an apostle, being chosen by the interposition and designation of Christ himself, to whom they prayed for that purpose^b.

The death of Judas^c is thus expressed, that *falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out*: in Matt. xxvii. 5, it is, *he departed, and went and hanged himself*; that is, he hanged himself, and (probably by the devil's procurement, who had possessed him) fell headlong from the place where he hung, and thereby burst asunder; his unparalleled sin having met with a suitable unheard-of punishment.

Among those who were assembled together after our Lord's ascension, we find^d *Mary the mother of Jesus*; which is the last time that she is mentioned in the holy Scriptures. What became of her afterwards is not revealed to us; most likely she continued with St. John to her death, unto whom Christ on the cross had committed the care of her^e; *Behold thy mother*; that is, take care of her, as if she were such. As for her *assumption* into heaven, (which the Church of Rome commemorates by a solemn festival-day on the 15th of August,) antiquity as well as the Scripture is silent; the tracts concerning it are known to be forged in after-ages^f. The first account out of any good author is that of Eusebius, and he only says, "Some have wrote that it was revealed to them^g." After him Epiphanius, who flourished about the year 368, thus expresses himself concerning it; "I define nothing, nor say that she remained immortal, and neither do I affirm that she died^h." So that it is plain, he knew nothing that could be depended on concerning her assumption. Lastly, Baronius himself is so tender as to say, "The church of God is more inclined to believe, that she is now, together with her body, in heavenⁱ."

We are next informed in the Acts^k, that Christ, who had

^a Prov. xvi. 33. ^b Acts i. ^c Verse 18. ^d Ver. 14. ^e John xix. 27.

^f Spanhemius Introduct. ad Historiam N. T. Canon i. ^g In Chronico. ^h Hæres. 78. Antidicomarianitarum, num. xi. ⁱ Martyrolog. Roman. August. 15.

^k Chap. ii. 1, &c.

promised the Holy Spirit, performed that promise on the tenth day after his ascension, it being the day of Pentecost, (a feast of the Jews, fifty days after the Passover,) celebrated in memory of the law delivered on mount Sinai; on the same day the apostles were enabled to publish the new law or gospel, the fulfilling of the old; for when *they were all with one accord in one place*, the Holy Ghost descended in the likeness of cloven fiery tongues upon the apostles and others, that were to be the first publishers of the Gospel. Whereby a company of illiterate persons were on a sudden enabled to speak unknown languages, and to interpret the tongues of others, among a great multitude of persons of different countries and languages; who being some of them Israelites or Jews of the dispersion, and other proselytes^l, were then at Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of Pentecost: every one of which heard them speak in their own tongues, (whether Hebrew, Chaldec, Persian, Arabic, Greek, Latin, and all the strange and different dialects whatsoever,) which they themselves used *in their own tongue, wherein they were born*; and all this in the name of Christ, and in confirmation of their testimony concerning his *resurrection* and his being *advanced at the right hand of the Father*^m. This was an amazing conviction, and gave a most uncontrollable evidence of a supernatural and divine assistance; this was a full proof that Christ had *all power in heaven and in earth* given unto him; and hereby the apostles and the first preachers of the Gospel were fitly qualified to declare to all that lived in different parts of the world what Christ had done, and to convert mankind to the Christian faithⁿ.

The particular effects of this Holy Spirit were, in the first place, an ability of understanding and speaking divers languages, as well to give evidence to a supernatural and divine assistance, (as hath been said,) as to qualify them for preaching to all nations; and also a power of working miracles, by casting out devils, healing diseases, and raising the dead, for the convincing both of Jews and Heathens; that power being

^l Ver. 10. ^m Ver. 22, &c. ⁿ Compare chap. iv. 31. viii. 17. x. 44, 45, 46, and xi. 15.

a clear evidence that God was with them, and gave testimony to what they preached and wrote, in pursuance of their commission^o. Another gift of the Spirit was, what St. Paul styles the gift of *faith*^p, or the faith of miracles; which consisted in a supernatural confidence or assurance, wrought by the Spirit in the soul of man, by which he was sure he could do such or such miracles, before he attempted to do them: thus^q, *Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains*: and^r, *Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles*: and this gift was necessary, lest they should attempt to do miracles when they could not, and so discredit their own doctrine and authority.

They had also, by this Holy Spirit, their minds enlightened, clearly to understand divine truth; and the gift of prophesying, or of understanding and teaching the hidden sense and mysteries of the Old Testament relating to Christ, and the state of the Gospel^s: also the gift of *discerning of spirits*^t, whereby they could discover the truth or falsehood of men's pretensions^u. And since there were lying wonders, they could discern by what spirit, whether good or evil, any extraordinary operation was performed, to distinguish the works of the devil from those of the Spirit of God. They had also the gift of boldness and courage in their own hearts^v, and the power of speaking, so as that their words might sink into the hearts of their hearers^w. They had moreover, by the same Spirit, a power of inflicting bodily punishment upon great and notorious sinners^z. Lastly, the apostles had a power to confer those gifts of the Holy Ghost on others, by laying hands on them^a.

These were the extraordinary divine assistances, which encouraged the apostles to undertake, and enabled them to go through with so difficult and hazardous an employment.

Note here, That the power by which these miracles were wrought, and which was afterwards communicated to many of the new converts to the faith, is frequently in this book called

^o Heb. ii. 3, 4.

^p 1 Cor. xii. 9.

^q 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

^r Acts vi. 8.

^s Chap. xix. 6.

^t 1 Cor. xii. 10.

^u As Acts viii. 21.

^x Chap. iv. 13.

^y Chap. ii. 37.

^z As Acts xiii. 11. 1 Cor. v. 5. 2 Cor. xiii. 2.

^a Acts viii. 17.

the Holy Ghost: by which is often meant, not the third Person in the Trinity, but the wonderful effusion of those gifts, the dispensation of which is derived from the Holy Spirit, the effects and operations of the Spirit, having often the name of the Spirit, who is the cause of those operations. Thus "the converts at Samaria *received the Holy Ghost*; that is, the gift of tongues, and other miraculous powers of the divine Spirit.

But if the Holy Ghost was now conferred on the apostles, why doth St. John inform us, that Christ, before his ascension, breathed on them, and said, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost*? This symbol or ceremony of breathing on them in St. John, hath been thought to mean a confirming them in their dependence on Christ's sending to them the Holy Ghost, and in some degree a conferring the same upon them, which we read, in the Acts, to be after Christ's ascension more plentifully sent down. But if we consider the whole passage^d, *As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained*: it seems that St. John gives an account of Christ's conferring, or more fully establishing, the apostolical and ministerial authority and commission, of publishing the Gospel of salvation, reconciling sinners to God, and of governing and instructing the church^e; sending them, as his Father had sent him, by *anointing* or consecrating him *with the Holy Ghost*^f. But in the Acts we have an account of the bestowing on them the means to enable them for the performance

^b Chap. viii. 15, 16, 17.

^c John xx. 22.

^d John xx. 21, 22, 23.

^e This was St. Cyrian's construction, (epist. 69. edit. Oxon.) Quo in loco ostendit, eum solum posse baptizare, et remissionem peccatorum dare, qui habeat Spiritum Sanctum. And St. Austin applies it in the same manner, contra Parmenianum, l. ii. c. 11. So also St. Chrysost. in Joh. xx. 21, &c. In this he is followed by Bishop Taylor, in his Life of Christ, part iii. §. 16. It is true indeed, before this time we find that Christ had *ordained* his apostles to *preach* the Gospel, and had given them *power* to work miracles in confirmation of it, Mark iii. 13, 14. Matt. x. 1. But by this last and more solemn ordination, they were fully established in their office.

^f Luke iii. 22. Acts x. 38.

and executing of that commission: so that ^g Christ gave to the apostles the commission, although they could not fully execute the same, till he should *send the promise of the Father upon them*, and they were *endued with power from on high*^h. To the same purpose, St. John says. *The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not then glorified*ⁱ. Of the conferring of which enabling power, in an open, visible manner, we have here the history in the Acts.

If we consider the sufferings which the apostles underwent, being subject to hunger and cold, want and necessity, stripes and imprisonments, we may conclude that they could not exercise this power of doing miracles at all times, or at their own pleasure; for if they could, most likely they would have cleared the way for their great work of publishing the Gospel, by putting off those sufferings; nor would St. Paul have left Trophimus at Miletum sick^k, or have suffered that infirmity, whatever it was, *the thorn in the flesh*^l, to have continued on himself. But they could and did work miracles, when God saw it necessary to evidence their commission from him, and to manifest the truth of their doctrine.

The holy apostles thus qualified, set about their great work of publishing the Gospel of salvation, and planting the church.

And first, they preached Christ to the Jews at Jerusalem, of whom above *three thousand* were converted^m. Therefore the church of Jerusalem is the mother church; the members whereof maintained their Christian society by their unanimity, in adhering stedfastly to the apostles and their doctrine, and by their joint devotion and mutual love and charity.

The great doctrine which the apostles especially pressed was, that Jesus, whom their rulers had crucified and slain as a malefactorⁿ, was yet alive, being *risen from the dead*, and ascended into heaven: of which that effusion of the Holy Ghost, which Jesus had promised before his death, and the miraculous works wrought by them in his name, or by virtue of his power, in testimony of that doctrine, was the most un-

^g In John xx.

^h Luke xxiv. 49.

ⁱ John vii. 39.

^k 2 Tim. iv. 20.

^l 2 Cor. xii. 7.

^m Chap. ii. 14, &c.

ⁿ Ver. 23.

controllable and convincing proof; and consequently that the same Jesus was *the Christ*, or true Messiah^o.

Soon after, the apostles came to be the more taken notice of, by healing a poor cripple above forty years old, who had been lame from his birth, and was wont to be laid at the entrance into the temple-court, and so was known to many for some years. The restoring to him the present use of his feet was much taken notice of, and brought together many people: Peter improved this opportunity, assuring them, that the miracle was effected by the power of, and faith in, the same Jesus, whom their rulers had crucified, and who was risen again from the dead, and glorified in heaven; and that he was that prophet, whom Moses had foretold God would *raise up* unto them^p, and whom all the prophets had spoken of, being that seed of Abraham, in whom all nations were to be blessed, that is, the Messiah and Saviour; concluding, that they were the persons to whom in the first place he was sent. This prevailed on many, insomuch that the believers were in number *about five thousand*^q. But the devil, seeing his kingdom decaying, stirred up the rulers to imprison the apostles and first Christians; but God delivered them, and they went on in publishing Christ to be the Messiah and Saviour, in working miracles, and converting many^r.

And whereas some of the believers were poor, divers of the richer sort sold their possessions, and brought the money to the apostles, to be distributed in common, as occasion required. Among the rest, one Ananias, and Sapphira his wife, pretended to do so too; but privately kept back a part of the price, and thereby attempted to deceive the apostles, though immediately guided by the Holy Ghost; as if the divine Spirit could not discern things secret: upon which they were made a severe example of, being stricken dead, for a terror to all others in that infant state of the church, and to establish the authority of the apostles, and the church's discipline: and the effect was accordingly, for *great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things*^s.

^o Ver. 32, 33, 36. and v. 30, 31, 32. ^p Deut. xviii. 15. ^q Chap. iii. 1, &c.
and iv. 4, 22. ^r Chap. iv. v. ^s Chap. v. 11.

And because, on the farther increase of the Christians, there was still a great number of widows and other poor, to be daily relieved out of the charitable contributions of the richer sort, and the common stock of the church, (the Jewish synagogues, to which they belonged, taking no farther care of them, who forsook the Jewish religion, and became Christians;) it so happened, that *there arose a murmuring of the Grecians*, or Hellenists, (that is, as some interpret ^t, Jews of the dispersion, who, living among the Greeks, spake the Greek language,) *against the Hebrews*, who used the Hebrew or Syriac tongue: or rather, as others ^u, these Grecians or Hellenists were Greeks or Gentiles by descent, but proselytes to the Jewish religion, and afterwards Christian converts, from whom the Jews, who were so by descent from Abraham, are here distinguished by the name of Hebrews. The objection ^v, that *the word* was preached to *the Jews only*, and yet ^y some are said to speak unto the *Grecians*, who therefore were Jews, is solved, by observing, that in the original, after the most ancient copies, it is not *Grecians*, but *Gentiles*; and, or but, *some of them spake unto the Gentiles* ^z, or Gentile converts at Antioch, who are here taken notice of. And this murmuring was, *because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration* of provisions; possibly because the Jewish Christians were kinder to those of their own nation, than to the Hellenists, or proselytes, who embraced Christianity. Now that the apostles might not be hindered by looking after those poor Christians, they chose seven deacons for that purpose; of whom St. Stephen was one, who being accused for affirming Jesus to be the Messiah, and the abolishment of the law of Moses, was stoned to death ^a.

This Stephen was the first martyr in the Christian church. But the malice and rage of the rulers did not end so: the other Christians at Jerusalem were sought after, persecuted,

^t Grotius and Hammond in Acts vi. 1. Mede, book i. disc. 20. ^u Dr. Wells's second discourse before the Gospels, and Dr. Cave of St. Stephen, num. 4.
^x From chap. xi. 19. ^y Ver. 20. ^z Not 'Ελληνιστας, but 'Ελληνας. So the Alexandrian, and accordingly the Vulg. Syr. Arab. Æthiop. Dr. Mill in loc.
^a Chap. vi. vii.

and imprisoned, especially by St. Paul; who, being zealous, *breathed out threatenings and slaughters* against the Christians: but God turned this to good; for many being scattered up and down the country of Judea and Samaria, the Christian faith was the more propagated, and many miracles were wrought to confirm it ^b.

At this time there was in Samaria a crafty and ambitious person, named Simon, who by sorcery and magic arts had deluded many into the belief that he was *the great power of God*: upon the preaching and miracles of Philip the deacon, he became a convert to the faith: but seeing the apostles, Peter and John, (who came to confirm the church of Samaria,) to confer the power of miracles, and other gifts of the Holy Ghost, by laying on their hands; his ambition and covetousness prompted him to offer them money, for the power of doing as they did: being rebuked, he pretended repentance ^c, possibly fearing to be made an example of dissimulation, as Ananias was. [But he afterwards proceeded in his magic arts, and became the author ^d of the first and grossest heresies in the church: at length, pretending to fly into heaven, on the prayer of St. Peter, it is said, he fell down and died.]

Philip, having left Samaria, was directed by an angel to an *eunuch*, who was chief treasurer to the queen of Ethiopia, (as it was anciently a custom, which still continues in the eastern parts, to employ eunuchs in offices of chief trust and command, especially by empresses or queens, to avoid suspicion ^e.)

^b Chap. viii. ^c Chap. viii. 9, &c. ^d Iren. l. i. c. 20. Tertull. de Præscript. Hæretic. §. 46. Dr. Cave, of St. Peter, §. 9. ^e Grot. in Acts viii. 27. So 2 Kings viii. 6. The king appointed an *officer*, Heb. an *eunuch*, to restore all that was hers. And Esth. iv. 4. *her chamberlains*, Heb. *eunuchs*. Therefore the Chaldee reads, in Gen. xxxvii. 36. for an eunuch, *Rabba*, a prince or officer. Upon which Bishop Patrick observes, that the Hebrew word *Saris* oftentimes not only signifies an eunuch, by whom the eastern queens were attended; but it likewise signifies all the great courtiers, as the Chaldee here translates it; and that this was the prime signification of the word, till in after-times the depravation of manners, and the jealousy of the eastern kings, made them set none but slaves, who were castrated, to attend their queens: by whom they were preferred to great offices, and so came to enjoy this name. But besides the jealousy of princes, another reason may be given for eunuchs being preferred to offices of state, *viz.* as having no obligation of wives and children, they may be supposed to be more trusty, and to study more the

This eunuch, being a proselyte to the Jewish religion, had come to Jerusalem to perform his worship at the temple; and being on his return, was converted and baptized by Philip^f. Some of the Christians were driven as far as Damascus, a city in Syria, one hundred and forty miles from Jerusalem^g.

Paul had received warrants from the high-priest and the council, to secure all he could find there: for it seems the Romans permitted^h the Sanhedrim, or great council in Jerusalem, to exercise an authority over their countrymen, in matters concerning their own religion, not only in Judea, but in all other places where there were Jewish synagogues; and even the governor of Damascus (with the connivance, no doubt, of Aretas the king) assisted the Jews in their persecution of the Christiansⁱ.

But we have an account, chap. ix. how this Paul, one of the violent persecutors of the church, was in a wonderful manner converted, (by a glory or dazzling light, and a voice from heaven,) and endued with the Holy Ghost. He was also made an apostle, and miraculously instructed *by the revelation of Jesus Christ himself*^k. Accordingly he begins his Epistles with *Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ*. He became afterward highly instrumental in settling Christianity in very many places of the world.

There is some variety of expressing the history of St. Paul's conversion. The voice above mentioned, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* St. Paul heard, but *they that were with him heard not the voice of him that spake to him*^l. And yet it is said^m, that they did hear *a voice*, that is, they heard a voice, but they did not understand it distinctly, though they might hear a confused noise like thundering; (so they in Johnⁿ, upon hearing such a kind of *voice from heaven, said*

service of the prince, than their own private advantage, or setting up a family for themselves. See, for the modern custom of employing eunuchs, Thevenot's Trav. part i. b. i. chap. 18. Ray's Collect. of Trav. part iii. chap. ii. p. 269. ^f Chap. vi. i. 26. ^g As Baudrand. Rauwolf says, six days' journey (at three miles to an hour's travelling, and six hours to a day.) Ray's Collect. of Trav. part iii. chap. i. p. 280. ^h Grot. in Acts ix. 2. ⁱ 2 Cor. xi. 32. ^k Gal. i. 2. 2 Cor. xii. ^l Chap. xxii. 9. ^m Chap. ix. 7. ⁿ John xii. 28, 29.

it thundered;) so that although they heard an inarticulate sound, as in chap. ix. yet they did *not*, as St. Paul, *hear the voice of him that spake*, or the distinct words of Christ^o.

What has been hitherto mentioned, is the substance of what was done in the space of about two years after Christ's ascension into heaven: and now it pleased God to order it, that the persecution ceased, and the Christians *were multiplied, walking in the fear of the Lord, and the comfort of the Holy Ghost*; the sick were healed, and the dead raised to life, and great multitudes of the Jewish people were converted, to whom the Gospel had been hitherto chiefly published, in Judea, and some other countries where the Jews resided^p.

Next we learn how the Gospel was preached to the Gentiles. To understand this, we are to consider that the Jews looked on themselves to be the peculiar people of God, as being the posterity of Abraham, and that all those of other nations and families, who were not Abraham's posterity, (whom they called Gentiles,) were^q unclean^r, no better than dogs, and neglected by God; who, they pretended, owned them alone for his children and favourites. Hence our Lord imitated the common phrase of the Jews, when at the first he rejected the petition of a woman of Canaan, (strictly so called,) who was a Greek, that is, a Gentile of Syrophenicia^s; *It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to dogs*^t. So that the Jews imagined the Gentiles had no title to the promises of the Messiah, and did not belong to his church, except they were circumcised, and were made proselytes to them and their religion, and so being admitted into their church, became Jews^u, and were wont to interpret all the ancient prophecies, of God's accepting of the Gentiles, as the members of his church under the Messiah, only as relating to the proselytes^x among the Gentiles, who came over to their religion: upon which account they were wont to upbraid the Christians, as being uncircumcised, and as such having no right to God's cove-

^o As chap. xxii. ^p Chap ix. 13. to the end. ^q Lightfoot Hor. in Joh. iii. 17. and 1 Cor. vii. 14. Cave, of St. Peter, §. 8. num. 4. ^r According to the expression, Isa. xxxv. 8. ^s Mark vii. 26. ^t Matt. xv. 26. ^u See 2 Esdras vi. 55, 56, 57. ^x Just. Martyr. Trypho, p. 354. and 361. edit. Jebb.

nant^y. But herein they were mistaken; for the Messiah was of old plainly promised to *all the families of the earth*, the Gentile or Heathen in the most general terms, and such as are not to be restrained to the Jews alone, or proselytes to them, but take in all other nations^z. Accordingly, when Christ was born, as an angel was sent to publish it to the Jewish shepherds; so the Gentiles, or wise men, from the east were led by a star to Christ. Now the tenth chapter of this book acquaints us, how it was plainly manifested to the apostles, that Christ died for us, who are Gentiles, as well as for the Jews, and that we are of the church of God, and the spiritual children^a of Abraham; namely, by a sheet let down from heaven to Peter in a vision at Joppa, that contained all creatures, as well those the law called unclean, as clean. This taught him to *call no man common or unclean*, ver. 28, but that God owned the Gentiles, signified by the unclean creatures, as well as the Jews, signified by the clean; as he did one Cornelius, who, though a *devout man*, and one who acknowledged and worshipped the true God, yet being only a proselyte of the gate^b, not of the covenant, and so not circumcised, was no Jew, but a Roman, and a Gentile, and as such accounted by the Jews: he with his company were baptized, God ratifying and confirming their title to the Gospel, by sending on them the gifts of *the Holy Ghost*^c.

This was done at Cæsarea, the most frequent residence of the Roman governors of Judea, and therefore inhabited by Jews and Gentiles.

Josephus observes^d, that the inhabitants were for the most part Greeks, *i. e.* Gentiles. This was the first evident manifestation that the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, had a title to Christ. O! let us praise the name of God, who hath called

^y Just. Martyr, *ibid.* p. 84. ^z Gen. xii. 3. Isa. xlix. 6. Hosea ii. 23. Amos ix. 11, 12. ^a *Ἰσραηλιτικόν, ἀληθινόν, πνευματικόν γένος.* Just. Martyr, *ibid.* p. 37.

^b See the third general remark on the Gospels, num. 4. That Cornelius was such a proselyte, seems evident; because St. Peter, in his discourse to him, says, that *all the prophets give witness* to Christ, chap. x. 43. which it is not probable the Apostle had done, if Cornelius and his companions had not owned the prophets, as being proselytes of the gate. ^c Chap. x. 44. ^d Wars, book iii. chap. 14.

us also to his kingdom and glory^e. We may here also observe, how God rewarded the piety of Cornelius; who, being *a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people and prayed to God always*, had the honour to be made the first-fruits of the conversion of the Gentiles; to whom the powers of the Holy Ghost were vouchsafed, as well as to the Jewish converts. [As for the eunuch of Ethiopia, who was before this converted by Philip, and baptized^f, he was most likely a proselyte of the^g covenant, and therefore came so long a journey to Jerusalem to pay his attendance on the worship of God in the temple^b, and so was reputed a Jew.]

There are two passages in the holy Gospel, which, if not rightly understood, may seem to contradict what hath been said of this privilege of the Gentiles. The firstⁱ, where Christ charged his disciples, *not to go into the way of the Gentiles, but rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*. This is answered in the 9th and 16th general remarks on the holy Gospels, to which the reader is referred. The second passage is^k where Christ says to a Greek, or Gentile woman^l, *I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel*. Christ was to be in person only among the Jews, to do his miracles, and preach to them, “forasmuch as they were the persons who believed in one God, and who had amongst them the prophecies, and accounts given many ages before of the coming of Christ; and therefore from their corner of the world, he was to be published in all other parts: he being the Sun of righteousness risen in Judea, from whence he should dart his rays into other places and countries^m.”

But after his resurrection, he gave commission to his apostlesⁿ, *Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized* (Gentile as well as

^e For this we may read over the whole tenth chapter of the Acts; and then compare with it Rom. xv. 8—14. and Eph. iii. 1—7. and what hath been said, in the first Part, concerning God's covenant with Abraham. ^f Chap. viii. ^g See the third general remark on the Gospels, num. 4. ^h Ver. 27. ⁱ Matt. x. 5.
^k Matt. xv. 24. ^l So called, Mark vii. 28. ^m Orig. contra Celsum, l. 6. fere ad finem. ⁿ Mark xvi. 15.

Jew) *shall be saved*: for then Christ was no more a messenger sent to the Jews, but a king sitting at the right hand of God^o.

Note here, That the Jews, because they were wont to be circumcised, are often called by the name of *the circumcision*, and the Gentiles by *the uncircumcision*: the Gentiles are also called Greeks^p, either because the language of the Greeks was the more general language then in use; or because of all the Gentile world, the Greeks were best known to the Jews, ever since the countries near Judæa (such as the Lesser Asia and Egypt) were subject to the Macedonian or Grecian kings.

This doctrine of the Gentiles' interest in the Gospel of salvation was such, as the apostles themselves, for about seven years after Christ's death, and the brethren who were at Jerusalem, were not satisfied in; nor was it as yet revealed unto them by the Holy Ghost: for, although Christ bade them *teach all nations*^q, and told them, that they should be witnesses unto him *unto the uttermost parts of the earth*^r; yet at first they seem to have understood this, of their preaching to the Jews dispersed amongst all nations, and through the earth: and so they who were *scattered abroad*^s, (who were doubtless some of those extraordinary inspired persons, of which an account has been given in the seventh general remark foregoing on the Acts,) are said to *preach the word to none but unto the Jews only*; but Peter, at his return to Jerusalem, relating the history of Cornelius, *they glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life*^t.

This was done about seven years after Christ's ascension into heaven.

Next we have an account of the spreading of Christianity in other parts, besides the country of the Jews; for as it was before observed, that the persecution under which Stephen suffered was turned by God to good, it being the occasion of dispersing the first Christians, and thereby of propagating

^o Grot. in Matt. xv. 24.

^p Idem in Acts xxi. 37. and Rom. i. 16.

^q Matt. xxviii.

^r Acts i. 8.

^s Acts xi. 19.

^t Chap. xi. 1—19.

the faith in several places of the country of the Jews; so also some of those that were scattered up and down went to other parts out of Judea, and came at length to Antioch, a city of Syria, about two hundred and eighty miles from Jerusalem[†], and there the Gospel was planted. The city of Antioch was a place remarkable for a great number of Jews, who inhabited there ever since the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, and enjoyed great privileges and immunities, and the same freedom of the city with the Greeks[‡], by the favour of the succeeding kings of Syria; insomuch, that several of the Gentiles became proselytes to them; which might be some reason why those Jews, who were converted Christians, and hunted out of their own country, resorted thither. When the account of the church of Christ being planted at Antioch was brought to the apostles at Jerusalem, they sent Barnabas to establish and confirm them. Those who received the faith of Christ, were before called amongst themselves the *brethren*, *disciples*, *believers*, and *saints*; but by the Jews, *the sect of the Nazarenes*[×], and *Galileans*, from Nazareth in Galilee, where Christ abode; but now at Antioch they first obtained the honourable name of Christians, from Christ their master^γ, which, as it should seem, was fixed upon them in an open solemn manner, as the word we render *called* imports in the original^². This was about ten years after Christ's ascension.

Soon after this there happened a famine, which had been foretold by Agabus, a Christian convert; and the brethren at Antioch shew the fruit of their Christian profession, by sending relief to their fellow-Christians at Jerusalem^³.

About the same time Herod Agrippa, grandson to Herod the Great before mentioned, having obtained of the Romans the government of Judea and Samaria, as well as Galilee, with the title of king, began a persecution of the Christians, especially at Jerusalem, the better to please the Jews; and

[†] Baudrand in Damascus, which, he says, is in the midway between Antioch and Jerusalem, 140 miles from each. [‡] Josephus, Wars, book vii. chap. 21. Gr. cap. 3. [×] Acts xxiv. 5. ^γ Chap. xi. 19, &c. ^² *Χρηματισαι*, an Antiochian term for a solemn publication; St. Luke, the writer of this book, being a native of Antioch. Mr. Gregory's Notes, chap. xxxvi. ^³ Chap. xi. 27, &c.

also out of his own zeal for the Jewish laws and rites, he being a most strict observer of them^b; and having beheaded James the Apostle, (called James the Great, whether because of his age or stature, or some peculiar favour conferred on him, is uncertain,) he apprehended Peter also; but God delivered him, and shortly after Herod died miserably: so the Gospel flourished, and many were converted^c.

In the next place, the xiiith and xivth chapters acquaint us, how Barnabas and Paul were chosen by the direction of the Holy Spirit at Antioch, and in a solemn manner ordained to preach the Gospel amongst the Gentiles in several countries. They did betake themselves first to the Jews, and, being rejected by them, then to the Gentiles, converting many by their doctrine and miracles; and at length returned to Antioch, and gave an account of their ministry.

The next thing recorded is the dispute which happened at Antioch, that occasioned some disturbance^d; namely, since many Gentiles, and particularly those of them who had been proselytes of the gate, were converted as well as Jews, whether those Gentile converts were obliged to be *circumcised*, and in other respects to *keep the law of Moses*; which the converted Jews would still suppose necessary; for although they were convinced by the powerful evidence of the Gospel, yet they still retained a very high veneration for the institutions of their great master Moses^e, and their old customs in which they had been brought up; which they would impose on the Gentile converts also. Upon this it was determined, that such a course should be taken, as was, by God's appointment, observed, for avoiding schism among the Jews, (and they were the people who made up a great number of those first converts.) They were in such case to repair to the Sanhedrim, or great council, and be determined by the same^f. In like manner, the church at Antioch appointed Barnabas and Paul to repair to those of the apostles and elders, who were then at Jerusalem, (the only Christian Sanhedrim;) for which also some think there was a revelation by the Spirit^g.

^b Joseph. Antiq. book xix. chap. 7. ^c Chap. xii. 1, &c. ^d Chap. xv. 1, &c.

^e Acts xxi. 20, 21.

^f Deut. xvii. 8—14.

^g From Gal. ii. 2.

Here a council is held, and Paul and Barnabas declare what miracles God had wrought by them among the Gentiles for their conversion; a plain evidence, that they were accepted by God without circumcision, or other Mosaic rites; especially since, as St. Peter declared, God bestowed on them, as well as the converted Jews, the gifts and powers of the Holy Ghost. At length it was determined, that the Gentile Christians were not bound to the Jewish Mosaical ordinances, as circumcision, and the rest; only *that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.* Which injunctions the apostles might lay on the Gentile converts, because they are agreeable to the precepts which the Jews suppose were given to the sons of Noah^h, and which they obliged the proselytes of the gate toⁱ submit to; which, therefore, it was as necessary for them to do now they were become proselytes to Christianity. And besides this, by observing the apostles' injunctions, they would forbear giving too great offence to the Jewish converts, (which would have been an hindrance to their Christian unity,) by their eating those things which the Jews made conscience to abstain from, as being expressly forbidden in their law, however they might be esteemed indifferent in themselves; namely, meats which had been offered to idols, that they might not so much as seem to partake in the idolatry^k; or *blood*, which is called *the life*, as containing the vital spirits, whereby they were cautioned against murder^l; or *things strangled*, for the avoiding of eating blood^m; and also that they should abstain from *fornication*, which the Gentiles allowed themselves in beforeⁿ their conversion, and accounted as no crime, especially whilst they accompanied only with those women who prostituted their bodies for gain. This determination Paul and Barnabas returned with, and the disturbance ceased in the church at Antioch, though the dispute was again renewed in divers places, and gave the apostles much trouble, as we shall find in the Epistles.

^h See general remark iv. on the Pentateuch. ⁱ See remark iii. on the Gospels concerning proselytes, num. 4. ^k Exod. xxxiv. 15. ^l Levit. xvii. 10.
^m Levit. xvii. 13. ⁿ Grot. in Acts xv. 20.

As to what follows in this book, we have not the particular account of all the apostles' travels, and planting churches; but chiefly of what relates to St. Paul, whose companion the writer was. And, first, we find that Paul and Barnabas agree to visit the several churches they had before planted; but, though good men, there happened a contention about taking one John with them, which occasioned them to part, and go several ways: but the providence of God is to be observed in this, the church being more enlarged afterwards by their separate labours*.

The xvi, xvii, xviii, xix, and xxth chapters give an account of St. Paul's further preaching the Gospel in several countries and cities, many thousand miles distant; travelling for that purpose by sea and land, from east to west, for about seven years, through many difficulties and hardships, planting the Gospel in many parts of the Lesser Asia; and in Europe, as in divers parts of Greece, chiefly in the cities of Thessalonica and Corinth; the Holy Ghost assisting him, and confirming his words by divers miracles.

Nor did he only travel up and down to preach and establish the Christian doctrine, but also wrote Epistles to several of the churches which himself or others had at first planted; whereby, though absent, he might, as occasion was offered, admonish, comfort, instruct, or confirm them. His great care, and compassionate concern for the Christian churches, may be observed by his farewell speech when he left Asia^p, and in several parts of his Epistles. His zeal also to do and suffer the utmost in the cause of Christ appears, in that it being foretold him by the Spirit, speaking by Agabus a prophet, that he should be bound at Jerusalem, and delivered up to the Gentiles; he was yet ready *not to be bound only, but to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus*^q.

And indeed, as he was designed for extraordinary service to the church, so he was encouraged in an extraordinary manner; for though he was not converted till after Christ's ascension, and so had not the happiness of conversing with our Lord Jesus on earth, as the other apostles; yet in a vision he had

* Chap. xv. 36, &c.

^p Chap. xx. 17, &c.

^q Chap. xxi. 10—14.

a glimpse of the heavenly joys, being *caught up to the third heaven*, where he saw and heard things unutterable[†]. The prospect of which unspeakable glory, no doubt, made him so earnest in his ministry, and so to neglect the world and this life, that he desired *to be dissolved, and to be with Christ*; and till that blessed time should come, he went on in his office of publishing the Gospel, and, notwithstanding the danger foretold, at length came to Jerusalem[‡].

What became of St. Paul afterwards, we read in chap. xxi. 17. to the end of the Acts, *viz.* that being come to Jerusalem, he was apprehended and brought before the council, or Sanhedrim, and was in danger of being murdered by the unbelieving Jews; but God encouraged and delivered him. Afterwards, he pleaded for himself, and accounted for his doctrine and life, before the procurators or governors, Felix and Festus, and also before King Agrippa: but after about two years imprisonment at Cæsarea, under the Roman governors, he appealed to the emperor, which occasioned his being sent prisoner to Rome. On the sea, he was miraculously preserved in a shipwreck. Being at length arrived at Rome, he was suffered to dwell in a private house. First, he betook himself (as heretofore in other places) to the Jews that were then at Rome, endeavouring to convince them that Jesus was the Messiah and Saviour: some he gained, others rejected his doctrine: then he turned to the Gentiles, and continued there two years. It was about twenty-eight years after Christ's ascension, when St. Paul was brought prisoner first to Rome. Here ends the history of the Acts.

The church writers give us some further account of St. Paul's and other apostles' travels up and down the world, in propagating the Gospel. They converted many countries; the Lord Jesus assisting them from heaven, and the Holy Spirit comforting them in all their troubles, and enabling them with power and efficacy to publish the glad tidings of salvation; so that in less than forty years space, the Gospel was preached throughout all the then known world. At length they sealed their doctrine with their blood, all of them in one

[†] 2 Cor. xii. 1, &c.

[‡] Acts xxi. 17.

place or other suffering death, except St. John, who also was condemned, and cast into a vessel of boiling oil, but miraculously delivered.

The holy Apostles, like their blessed Master, the Lord Jesus, bearing their cross here, and fulfilling their ministry, obtained a crown of eternal life.

Among other countries, our British isles were early enlightened, and blessed with the knowledge of the Gospel of salvation; and that by the preaching of some one of the apostles, as the ancients affirm^u; however, in the apostolical times. O! let us adore and praise God for his infinite goodness towards us, and yield ourselves as that *good ground*, on which the word of life is sown, that we may *bring forth good fruit* unto eternal bliss. *Amen.*

CHAP. X.

Observations on the Acts of the Apostles.

1st, **T**HAT the all-wise and powerful God brought to pass his design, in publishing the Gospel, and propagating the Christian religion, notwithstanding all the power and malice, and violence of the unbelieving Jews, or the Gentiles; and that without any human assistance or force of arms, any conquests over foreign countries, or the death of its enemies; but by the sufferings of its blessed Author himself, and most of those who bare witness to it; which is a good evidence, that Christ is that *stone cut out of the mountain without hands*^x, because he it was that set up his spiritual kingdom without any earthly means. Here also we see from what small beginnings the Christian church was at first established in the world, *viz.* from one hundred and twenty assembled in an^y *upper room*, which so increased, that one of the ancients, in the very next age to the apostles, mentioned^z the churches of Germany, Gaul, Spain, the East, Egypt, Libya, besides Jerusalem, and the countries near it; and this was according to our Sa-

^u Euseb. Demonstr. Evangel. l. iii. c. 7. apud Stillingfleet's Orig. Britan. c. 1. p. 35. ^x In Dan. ii. 34, 45. ^y Chap. i. 13, 15. See what is said of the *upper room* on Dan. vi. ^z Irenæus, l. i. c. 6. et not. *ibid.*

viour's parable relating hereunto ^a, that *the kingdom of heaven*, or the propagating of the Gospel, was *like a grain of small mustard-seed* growing up to a great tree, (as in those countries it did ^b.) So that nothing can be more evident, than that this effect of preaching the Gospel was truly miraculous, and the work of God. It is true, when the principles of a religion are suited to the lusts, and interests, and wishes of men, as were those of the impostor Mahomet, it comes so recommended, that it is no wonder it should be greedily received; or when the doctrine is supported by persons in power and authority, and is either forced on men by threats and punishments, or makes its way by rewards and interests, (as the Mahometan religion did,) the cause of its spreading may easily be accounted for; but when, on the contrary, the doctrine appears harsh to men's natures, and they are beforehand forewarned of the danger of entertaining it, with the loss of whatever conduces to the outward comforts of life, or even life itself; and also the promoters of such doctrine appear mean and contemptible, and, instead of obtaining help from, are by all possible methods opposed by, the powers of the world, and those who are eminent either for authority or learning, as was the case of the Gospel; the Divine power and virtue must be supposed to attend its progress.

And further, this suggests to us a plain confirmation of the truth of the miracles being wrought by the apostles, in their first planting of the Gospel of Christ, (and they who are not convinced of the truth of them, must allow it to be the greatest miracle that ever it was planted at all;) for as the very being of the world, when created, is a proof that it was at first miraculously created; so this wonderful spreading of the profession of the Gospel is equally a proof that it was miraculously propagated; otherwise it was not possible it should be so speedily and effectually done, considering the nature of the religion, the weakness of the instruments in themselves, and the opposition made against them.

2dly, That God's best servants may undergo much trouble in this world, witness the labours and afflictions of the apostles.

^a Matt. xiii.

^b Lightfoot Hor. in Matt. xiii. 32.

3dly, We learn here the establishment and practice of the first Christian church, the members whereof were entered into the church by *baptism*; they had *public prayers*, and *preaching*, and *praised God*; they frequently celebrated the Lord's Supper, or *breaking bread*; they maintained *union, continuing stedfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship*; and were exceeding *charitable* in relieving the poor^c.

4thly, As there was a distinct order of men under the Mosaic dispensation to execute the office of the priesthood, (Moses, having his immediate commission from God himself, was commanded to consecrate Aaron and his sons for the priest's office^d;) so there was from the beginning a distinct order of persons under the Gospel ministration; for the apostles fixed a settled ministry, *ordaining elders in every church*^e. And as the apostles ordained certain persons to the pastoral office, so they gave them power of ordaining others; whereby due care was taken, from the beginning of Christianity, for a supply of persons in the ministry for the future, by ordination, or laying on of hands, and prayer, as the necessity of the church should require^f. And this solemn ordination was performed, notwithstanding the immediate appointment of the Holy Ghost^g; whereby it appears, 1st, That an outward visible calling and ordination of ministers is necessary; and, 2dly, That the bishops and pastors of the church, however restrained or limited in respect of the manner of exercising their ministerial function by human governors, do yet derive their authority, not from the people, or the civil magistrate, but from Christ and his apostles. This will appear more fully, if we further consider the first beginning or incorporating of the Christian church, which was by a divine commission to the apostles, authorizing them to teach and convince men, and then to admit them into the Christian society or church by baptism, and to settle them as an ecclesiastical body or society^h; which society the apostles call *the body of Christ*, as being united to him the Head, by whose authority

^c See especially chap. ii. 41, to the end, compared with chap. viii. 12. and xx. 7.

^d Exod. xxviii. 1.

^e Acts xiv. 33. Compare Acts xi. 30. and James v. 14.

^f 2 Tim. ii. 2. Tit. i. 5.

^g Acts xiii. 2, 3.

^h Matt. xxviii. 17, &c.

it was at first established : so again ^l, *Ye are God's household, ye are God's building*, &c. incorporated and built up by the apostles, who received their authority and power therein from Christ.

In the next place, as the Christian church first began, so without the continuance of the same divine authority by which it first began, it cannot continue to be a Christian church according to Christ's original institution ; nor can the members of it continue to be entitled to those divine privileges, which upon its first incorporation were annexed to it, as to be in covenant with God, and thereby have a title to the graces of the Spirit, and hopes of eternal life ; no more than a corporation, at first established by the king's charter, can continue to be the same corporation, and enjoy the same privileges, without the continuance of the same royal authority by which it was incorporated at the first. And therefore the apostles' divine authority in gathering, incorporating, and settling the church, could not expire with their persons, because those divine offices, by which the Christian society or church subsists, cannot be duly and regularly performed, without a divine authority in the ministers officiating therein ; as in preaching, and reconciling men to God, admitting them into his church, and making them solemn promises in his name, and sealing to them the new covenant with God, through Christ in the sacraments, &c. Hence they are styled *ambassadors for Christ* ^k ; *the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God* ^l. And Christ *gave some pastors and teachers for the work of the ministry* ^m. So that it cannot be lawful for any to take upon themselves this office, unless they be first lawfully called thereto : for how can any be Christ's ambassadors, and transact in his name, unless they receive authority from him, and are sent by him ? Again, since the office of the priesthood is as sacred as ever, no reason can be assigned why a divine commission is not still as necessary as at the beginning ; and therefore for any others who are not sent ⁿ, to invade the priesthood, and thrust themselves upon the performance of

^l Eph. ii. 20.

^k 2 Cor. v. 20.

^l 1 Cor. iv. 1.

^m Eph. iv. 11, 12.

ⁿ Rom. x. 15.

ministerial divine offices, is as much contrary to the design of the Gospel, as it was for a layman to offer sacrifice under the law. The deacons in the primitive church were indeed to take care of the poor, as hath been said; but that was not their whole employment; they did also preach the Gospel, as did Stephen^o, and Philip^p; for which purpose they were to be persons *full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom*^q, and were ordained to that office, as well as others of the ministerial function^r; and the distinction of clergy and laity is as old as the first age of Christianity^s.

It hath been objected against one of the offices, *viz. preaching*, that there is no necessity for it now, when all people own the profession of Christianity among us, although it was needful when the Christian doctrine was not well known or understood in the world; but then it is to be observed, that Christ did not only appoint preachers for the conversion of infidels, but also *pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, and for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*^t. Therefore, as long as the church is in its imperfect state, as long as it may want unity, or knowledge, or improvement, this office of teachers is to continue; which is profitable in its degree, for the same ends for which the holy Scripture is useful, *viz. for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*^u. Some are fallen into errors, others into troubles; some forget God and their souls, and others run on in sin: so that there will always be occasion to instruct and reclaim, to support, awaken, and encourage.

And for the *people*, it appears from what has been said that they had no common right or practice in preaching or

^o Chap. vi. 8, &c. ^p Chap. viii. 12. ^q Chap. vi. 3. ^r Ver. 6.

^s Clem. Rom. Epist. ad Corinth. c. 40, 41. Ignatius passim. Cypr. Epist. 30. Obj. 1 Pet. v. 3. All Christians are called *God's heritage*, or clergy, *των κληρων*. Ans. This is no more than what is said of the people of Israel, Deut. iv. 20. that they were God's *inheritance*, or peculiar people, that is, in opposition to the heathen; and yet God had his peculiar *κληρος*, his priests among his people. ^t Eph. iv. 11, &c. ^u 2 Tim. iii. 16.

administering the sacraments with the ministers in the times of the apostles. Some texts of Scripture have been misapplied in this respect; for instance, St. Paul in those words^v, *not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, &c.* does not suppose the laity as much bound to *exhort*, or speak in the public assemblies, as to assemble; so long as, here we see, there were pastors sent, and commissioned, and appointed to preach and exhort *ministerially*; but the people should exhort and encourage each other by mutual acts of charitable piety, and by way of brotherly communication: and in particular, encouraging each other to persevere in the faith, and in the *assembling themselves together*, not drawing back from Christianity, and returning to the worship of the synagogue, for fear of persecution from the unbelieving Jews; which was the design of the Apostle in that place. Nor does the Apostle's forbidding the women to teach^w, infer the right of men in common to do so; for the context^x plainly shews the Apostle meant not the ordinary ministerial speaking, but extraordinary, by some impulse of the spirit of prophecy, as was usual in those times, although even in this case he suffered not the women to speak in the congregation. So that this can only infer the right of the men to shew their miraculous gifts in public, but not to exercise any ministerial office, except appointed thereunto.

As for those, who, being *scattered abroad, went every where preaching the word*^y, and those *many of the brethren, who were bold to speak the word without fear*^z; since a settled ministry was peculiarly appointed, it must be either understood of those brethren, whose province it was to preach, or they were extraordinarily inspired, and so had their mission from the Holy Ghost, as prophets or evangelists^a, to proclaim the Gospel among infidels: for the Holy Ghost frequently fell on the first converts. Thus, ^b*they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake the word with boldness.* And^c, *the*

^v Heb. x. 25. ^w 1 Cor. xiv. 34. ^x From ver. 29. ^y Acts viii. 4. and xl. 19. ^z Phil i. 14. ^a Πνευματικοί. ^b Acts iv. 31. ^c Acts xix. 6.

Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. From hence appears the great mistake of those, who, from extraordinary prophets and teachers^d in the beginning of Christianity, (which long since have ceased,) pretend a pattern for the exercising of the ministerial offices by any of the common people. *Lastly*, What St. Peter says^e concerning the privileges of Christians, to whom belong the glorious titles given formerly to the Jewish nation^f, *Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood*, does not infer that all Christians are equally priests and ministers; but notes the spiritual freedom and liberty of Christ's church in a figurative expression, that it is separated from the world, and peculiarly beloved of God; as anciently the people of the Jews were. So^g, *he hath made us kings and priests unto God*; but Christians in general are no more literally priests, than kings. So the same question may still be asked now, with St. Paul^h, *Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers?*

5thly, As for the primitive government of the Christian church, and the power of *ordination*, or calling and sending ministers; the apostles, whilst they lived, did for the most part manage the episcopacy, or the supreme government of the churches, themselves, presiding over those of their own foundation. Thus St. Paul had *the care of*, and visited the churches of his own plantingⁱ, wrote Epistles to them as their spiritual governor, and ordered the discipline^k, and that with *authority which the Lord had given him*. Thus also he exercised episcopal authority over the elders at Ephesus, sent for them to Miletus, and gave them his charge to perform their duties^l; which is a manifestation that they were under his government. But as the apostles withdrew, they committed the care and government of churches to such persons whom they appointed thereto. And this is so evident, that Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, (who was educated under Polycarp, one of St. John's disciples^m,) assures us, that "he could reckon up the names of those whom the apostles had ap-

^d See the seventh general remark foregoing on the Acts.

^e 1 Pet. ii. 9.

^f Exod. xix. 6. ^g Rev. i. 6. ^h 1 Cor. xii. 29. ⁱ Acts xv. 36. 2 Cor. xi. 28.

^k 1 Cor. v. 1—8. 2 Cor. ii. 6. ^l Acts xx. 17, &c. ^m Cave's Life of Irenæus.

pointed bishops in their several churchesⁿ." This hath been esteemed the true state of the first and apostolical age; of which we have an uncontrollable evidence in Timothy and Titus, and the angels or bishops of the churches in the Revelations^o. Some indeed have observed a community of the names *bishop* and *presbyter* in the New Testament, the same persons being styled *bishops* and *elders*, or *presbyters*^p. But then they were as yet under the care and government of the apostles; for this community of names was proper to the apostolical times, while the apostles themselves kept the greatest part of episcopal authority in their own hands: and even then, supposing bishops or elders and deacons should signify mere presbyters and deacons, there were yet three orders in the church, *apostles*, *presbyters*, and *deacons*; but then, as the apostles were withdrawn, and so the name of an apostle began to be laid aside, [out of reverence to the apostles,] the name of bishops was appropriated to their successors in their supremacy; and things are more ancient than the names they are called by. So that we may allow for the community of names between bishop and presbyter for a while in the church, that is, while the apostles governed the churches themselves, (as under the law both the high-priest and the priests of inferior order were called by the common name of priests^q;) but afterwards, that which had been part of the apostolical office, became the episcopal, which hath continued to this time in the Christian church. Insomuch that Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, (who had conversed with the apostles, and was a disciple of St. John^r, and died within ten years after him,) mentions the three distinct orders; "By Damas your excellent bishop, and Bassus and Apollonius your presbyters, and Socio your deacon^s." To which may be added farther, that however in the New Testament bishops and presbyters might be called by the same name, yet the power and right

ⁿ Irenæus, l. iii. c. 3. See also l. iv. c. 63. and l. v. c. 20.

^o See the first

observation on Timothy and Titus, and the second observation on the Revelations.

^p As they conjecture from Phil. i. 1. Titus i. 5, 7.

^q Lev. i. 7, 8.

^r Cave's

Life of Ignatius.

^s Epist. ad Magnes. §. 2, 6. and Trall. §. 2.

of ordaining others was in the hands of those who were superior to presbyters [†].

6thly, The Jewish circumcision, and other legal institutions, as being types and shadows, were abolished, or rather ceased of themselves, by Christ's coming, who was the substance; and therefore ought not to have been *imposed as necessary* ^u. St. Paul indeed circumcised Timothy, that he might accommodate himself to the Jews at that time, the better to prevail upon them, who would not otherwise have conversed with him ^x; and on other occasions, he complied with them to *gain them*; but when the Judaizing Christians urged the necessity of the Mosaical institutions, in order to salvation under the Gospel, this he could by no means allow; for that would have supposed that the Messiah (who was the substance of what those ordinances were but as shadows) was not yet come ^y. The temple worship continued to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the apostles and evangelists complied (as far as they could consistently with preaching up Jesus) with that worship and the law of Moses ^z, that thereby they might the more easily convert the Jews, and keep them from relapsing into Judaism again; for the Jewish Christians were wont to continue *zealous of the law*, even after their conversion ^a, till by degrees they came more perfectly to understand the Gospel ministration. It was also fit that the ceremonial law and worship, which was at first established by God himself, and in its season ordained for the spiritual remedy and salvation of the Jews, should not, like the idolatrous worship of the heathen, be presently condemned as impious and destructive; but go off by degrees, and be the more decently extinguished.

7thly, As it hath been said before ^b, that the Jews were wont to receive proselytes, not only by circumcision, but also by baptizing them; so it is farther evident, that their custom

[†] Bishop Beveridge's Codex Can. Eccles. prim. l. ii. c. 11. and Bishop Potter's Government of the Ancient Church. ^u Chap. xv. ^x Chap. xvi. 3.

^y Compare chap. xxi. 20, &c. and 1 Cor. ix. 20, 21, 22. with Gal. v. 1, &c. and Eph. ii. 15. ^z Acts ii. 46. and xxi. 23, 24. ^a Acts xxi. 20, 21. ^b In the tenth remark on the holy Gospels, §. 4.

was^c, when the parents were made proselytes and baptized, to baptize their children too: and this was so common, that they made a rule, in case a woman with child were made a proselyte, and so baptized, then that child, when born, had no farther need to be baptized afterwards; otherwise it should. Now since we find that the apostles baptized persons who believed in Christ with their families, as *Lydia* and *her household*; and the keeper of the prison, being converted, was baptized, *he and all his*^d; though it be not expressed that infants were in these families, (as most probably they were in some or other of them,) yet since they were wont to be admitted to the seal of the covenant, by being circumcised and baptized among the Jews, when their parents were proselytes; unless it had been expressly explained otherwise in the Scripture, how can we understand, but that the apostles did baptize them with their believing parents? for such infants are within the covenant, and called^e *holy* by St. Paul^f, on the account of their parents *believing*, and being members of the church. The two principal ends of the institution of baptism are answered by the baptism of infants, *viz.* their being visibly admitted members of Christ's church, and a title being conveyed to them in this laver of regeneration, to the sanctifying graces of the Holy Spirit. So that, in short, since children are declared by Christ to have a title to *the kingdom of heaven*, and as such were *brought* to him, and *blessed* by him^g; and St. Paul declares those of believing parents to be holy, or within the covenant; since it was the method among the Jews to instruct persons of age, and make them proselytes, and then to admit their children also by baptism; and, lastly, since Christ gave a general commission to *disciple him all nations, baptizing them*, without excepting infants^h; it cannot be understood, but that the apostles did proceed in making proselytes to Christianity, in the same manner as the Jews were wont to do in making their proselytes to Judaism, *viz.* by informing and convincing grown

^c Lightfoot Hor. in Matt. iii. 6.

^d Acts xvi. 15, 33.

^e See the 11th ob-

servation on 1 Cor.

^f 1 Cor. vii. 14.

^g Mark x.

^h Matt. xxviii. 19.

persons, and baptizing them on their faith and repentance; and likewise, baptizing the children also of the faithful, as being within the covenant, and therefore to be received into the Christian church by baptism, as well as infants were wont to be received into the Jewish church by circumcision. As for the primitive church, we are assured it was of general practice from some of the earliest writers¹.

8thly, *Set forms* of public prayer and thanksgiving are warranted by the practice of St. Paul, who used to frequent the synagogue of the Jews^k, as it had been the custom of Christ so to do^l. Now the Jews had^m in their synagogues, in those times, stated forms of prayer and thanksgiving, which Christ and St. Paul most assuredly joined with them in, when they frequented their synagogues, at the accustomed times of divine service; and if forms of prayer were either not lawful, or not convenient, especially in the public service, no doubt but that both Christ and his apostles would have cautioned the church against them.

9thly, The gifts of the apostles and evangelists were extraordinary and miraculous, and plainly convincing. They did not barely pretend an inspiration of the Holy Spirit, but (as Christ himself had done before) shewed their credentials, and God's seal, by speaking divers languages, and working miracles; and therefore, those who pretend to the extraordinary gifts of understanding the Scripture, and teaching others, without the ordinary means of study and learning, ought to confirm the truth of such pretensions, by healing diseases, raising the dead, and such like, as the apostles did, or they ought not to be believed; because, without such demonstration of their extraordinary mission, they presumptuously pretend to a greater character than Christ or his apostles did; seeing without such signs they would not require men's belief. It is also further to be considered, that, if every one who pretends to inspiration is to be hearkened to, we should be

¹ Forbesii *Instructioes Historic. Theol.* l. x. cap. 5. num. xiv. &c. Mr. Wall's *History of Infant Baptism.* Mr. Bingham's *Orig. Eccles.* book xi. §. 5, &c.
^k Acts xiii. 14. and xviii. 4. ^l Matt. iv. 23. Luke iv. 16. and xii. 9. ^m See remark x. on the Gospels, num. iii.

continually exposed to many delusions, since different persons have pleaded inspiration for doctrines contrary to one another; and therefore great care is to be taken, that the wanderings of men's own fancies be not mistaken for the inspiration of God's Spirit, either by themselves or others. All ought to allow this solid truth, *viz.* whatsoever inward motion is inconsistent with, or contrary to, any doctrine of the holy Scripture, it cannot proceed from the Spirit of God, because the Scripture was at first inspired by the same divine Spirit; and he is still the same, and cannot contradict himself, (as we are particularly put in mind ".) So that all those who teach any doctrine contrary to the doctrine already revealed, and who deny any gospel ordinance, as the orders of ministers, the sacraments, &c. ought to consider what spirit they are of, since it is plain they have not the Spirit of God.

But some have applied to themselves the prophecy of Joel^o: *I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy: and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit.* Such would be convinced of their mistake, if they would attend to the explanation St. Peter gives of that very prophecy, *viz.* that by it were foretold the miraculous gifts of tongues and languages, bestowed on the apostles and some others of the first Christians, in order to convince the Jews and Gentiles, at the first publishing of the Gospel, and that that prophecy was then fulfilled^p; *This is that* (or the completion of that) *which was spoken by the prophet Joel; and it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God,* (that is, in the times of the Messiah, or Christ,) *I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,* &c. upon persons of all nations, ranks, and sexes, as was in that age miraculously effected; and when the pretenders to the Spirit now-a-days can give the same evidence the apostles did of the fulfilling of this prophecy, we may allow them the same credit. In like manner, Christ promised his immediate and extraordinary assistance to his apostles, when they should be at any time delivered up to governors for his sake^q; *It shall*

ⁿ Mal. iii. 6. Heb. xiii. 8.

^o Chap. ii. 29.

^p Acts ii. 16, 17.

^q Matt.

x. 19, 20.

be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak ; for it is not ye that speak, (of your own ability,) but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you : but those who pretend or expect the like powers, now such extraordinary gifts are ceased, may as well pretend or expect to speak with tongues, cast out devils, and heal diseases, as the apostles did by virtue of the same assistance. *Lastly*, Some ignorant persons lay claim to the prophecy^r, which Christ repeats^s, *They shall be all taught of God* ; which prophecy was by Isaiah applied to the setting up of Christ's kingdom, and is particularly explained^t to be meant of being taught of God, through Christ's revealing to us the will of his Father, which we are to come unto him for.

Thus also^u, *They shall not teach every man his neighbour ; all shall know me from the least to the greatest*, appertains to the new covenant in Christ^v, under which God's laws should be more plainly revealed, as to the spiritual design of them, and that inward purity they should teach, more agreeable to the minds and hearts of men, and as if written therein ; so a clear revelation of God's will is expressed, as being in the hearts of the Israelites^w, or plainly taught by Moses ; but yet the laws of God are more evidently taught by the apostles, as to their spiritual design, than was under the old covenant, which God made with the Israelites when he delivered them out of the land of Egypt^x, that is, than by the letter of the law of Moses. This promise, more immediately made to the house of Israel, and the house of Judah^y, may possibly be more completely made good at the general conversion of that people.

Lastly, The places of Scripture mentioned by some, for the justifying their pretence of more immediate assistance of the Holy Spirit, in qualifying them for understanding and teaching the will of God, either intend the extraordinary and miraculous spiritual gifts vouchsafed to the apostles, and some others, at the first publishing of the Christian religion, being

^r Isa. liv. 13.^s John vi. 45.^t John vi. 44, 45, 46.^u Heb. viii. 11.

from the prophet Jer. xxxi. 33, &c.

^x As the context shews, ver. 8, 9, 10.^y Deut. xxx. 14.^z As Heb. viii. 9.^a Verse 8.

that *unction from the Holy One, or anointing which they had received*^a; or else, an *enlightening the understanding* by the divine Spirit, the better to apprehend the truths *already revealed by God* in the holy Scriptures; but there is no promise of any different light or inspiration, inconsistent with, much less in opposition to, the same Scriptures.

Thus much for the Acts of the Apostles.

CHAP. XI.

The Epistles.

CONCERNING the Epistles, we may remark, *1st*, That there were particular occasions of writing some of them, from the condition and state of the churches, and by reason of some disputes in those times, and of some particular cases in which the Christians desired to be resolved^b. And therefore, the best way to understand any part of these Epistles, is to observe what appears to be the occasion or chief design of them. The want of attending to this rule has caused many and great errors: for to pick out a verse or two, and criticise on a word or expression, and ground a doctrine thereon, without considering the main scope of the Epistle, and the occasion of writing it, is just as if a man should interpret ancient statutes or records by two or three words or expressions in them, without regard to the true occasion upon which they were made, and without any manner of knowledge and insight into the history of the age in which they were written: it is manifest this would cause great mistakes.

Second remark. Notwithstanding the particular occasion of some of the Epistles, they are all of general use for the whole church in all places, and at all times, by the providential designment of the Holy Ghost; because in them many of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and the mysteries of our holy religion, are enlarged on; such as the resurrection from the dead, the design and use of the blessed sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the meaning of many dark prophecies

^a 1 John ii. 20, 27.

^b See 1 Cor. i. 11. vii. 1. and viii. 1.

concerning Christ in the Old Testament, the atonement for our sins by the sacrifice of the blood of the Son of God, &c.

Seeing many of the Christian doctrines are not so fully and particularly explained in the Gospels, it is evident the apostles were instructed by the Holy Ghost to write these Epistles; which, together with the Gospels, were to make up the complete rule of the Christian faith.

Again, in these Epistles many particular Christian duties are more fully treated of; as love and charity, justice, mercifulness and pity, patience, contentedness, temperance, devotion, and the public worship of God, &c. and also a Christian behaviour in several conditions and relations; as of kings and their subjects, fathers and children, husbands and wives, masters and servants: in short, the Epistles more at large shew us the life and spirit of Christianity; *vis.* that it consists in nicely avoiding all sin and impurity, in living above the world, and exercising the duties of a heavenly conversation, having a stedfast faith in Christ's merits, and being supported under all difficulties and sorrows, with the joyful hope of eternal life. And we cannot but adore the goodness and providence of God, that such occasions were given for the writing the Epistles, in which the Holy Spirit by the apostles instructed the church, as might be both useful at that time, and also in all ages, to the world's end.

Third remark. The churches were already founded when the Epistles were written; and therefore, we cannot expect in them all the particulars that concern the discipline and government of the church, nor all the circumstances of religious worship: such matters the apostles ordered themselves in person^a. So that we are not to reject the injunctions of the governors of the church in things indifferent, if they tend to promote decency, order, and edification, on pretence we do not find those particular observances to be mentioned in the Epistles. This remark does also instruct us the more to esteem the accounts which the most primitive fathers give concerning the customs of the ancient church, from the be-

^a 1 Cor. xi. 2, 34. Tit. i. 5.

ginning of Christianity; which we have reason to apprehend were agreeable to the ordinances which were delivered to the churches by the apostles

Fourth remark. There were some dangerous opinions spread about, which the Holy Ghost, by the apostles, had often respect to, whether forged by Simon Magus, the sorcerer and magician above mentioned, or others who had very much corrupted the Christian religion, by bringing in the most destructive principles and practices^b; such as the worshipping angels, as being the creators of the world; the eating of things offered to idols as such; and that in a time of persecution it was lawful to avoid danger, though by renouncing the Christian faith, and sacrificing to idols; that good works were a bondage, not agreeing to their Christian liberty and privileges; and that they might take their liberty of doing what pleased and delighted themselves, though it were sinful.

And as these heretics pleaded for sin and debauchery, so others of them pretended^c more than ordinary severities and mortifications of the body, and an abstinence from lawful things; as marriage, and eating flesh, &c. according to the discipline of some particular societies of men in those times amongst the Jews and Heathens. Now these heretics contended that Christians should imitate them in this, in order to the perfecting their religion, and rendering themselves the more acceptable to God. The apostles, in many of their discourses, had an eye to these principles and practices. For example^d, against worshipping angels^e; against idols and their offerings^f; about holding fast the faith, and not drawing back for fear^g; against the debauches and vices of those heretics; and^h against the pretensions of extraordinary mortifications and abstinence.

Fifth remark. For the more particular understanding St. Paul's discourses, we are to observe, that he lays down this

^b Irenæus, l. i. c. 20. et Not. Grab. *ibid.* Confer Cave, St. Paul, §. 9. and Whitby, Col. ii. 18. ^c Hammond and Dr. Whitby in Col. ii. 23. ^d Col. ii. 18. ^e 1 Cor. viii. and 2 Cor. vi. 16, &c. ^f Heb. x. 23. ^g Rom. xiii. 12, 13. Phil. iii. 17, &c. Eph. v. 3—6. 2 Pet. ii. ^h Coloss. ii. 20, 21.

as a foundation of many of them, *viz.* That our ⁱ reconciliation with God proceeds altogether from his free grace and favour, in offering a new covenant unto mankind in Christ Jesus; and this leads him into a dispute against three sorts of persons, (whereof the two first were professed enemies of the Gospel,) *viz.* the Gentiles or Heathens, and the unbelieving Jews; the third, the Judaizing Christians. Against the two former he asserts, that they are not *the works* either of the Gentile or the Jew, whether according to the law of nature, or the law of Moses, which can *justify*, (that is, exempt from the punishment for past sins, and make one accepted with God,) and therefore that there is a necessity that all, both Jews and Gentiles, who would be saved, comply with the terms of this covenant, *viz.* in believing Christ to be the Son of God, and the true Messiah, with a due conformity to the will of his heavenly Father, which he hath revealed to us^k.

Sixth remark. A third sort of adversaries to the truth of the Christian religion, against whom St. Paul disputes, were the Judaizing Christians, that is, such as would join the ceremonial ordinances of the law of Moses, together with faith in Christ, as being equally necessary to salvation. For so it was, that most of those who first embraced Christianity were Jews; these had been brought up in an high esteem for the law of Moses, especially the ordinance of circumcision, with the other Mosaical institutions, which they knew to be of God, and the latter traditions of the rabbies; so that however they believed in Christ, yet many of them could not easily be persuaded^l, but that the old legal ordinances were in force still; nay, that the converted Gentiles also (especially those among them who had been proselytes of the gate) were bound to observe them; as hath been before remarked on the Acts. Hence came the dispute, whether only the belief and practice of the Christian religion, as taught by Christ and his apostles, or else, besides that, circumcision and other observances of the law of Moses, were necessary to salvation. Now the setting of this right takes up a great part of St. Paul's

^l Bishop Bull, *Harmonia Apostol.* ^k See, for instance, the first part of the Epistle to the Romans, and Eph. ii. 1—10. ¹ See Acts xxi. 20.

Epistles, especially those to the Romans and Galatians; it being the Christian doctrine, that the belief and practice of the Christian religion was perfectly sufficient to salvation, without circumcision and other observances of the law of Moses. Not but that the apostles sometimes complied with the Jews, as it has been observed before, in the use of some Levitical ceremonies, the better to gain upon them^m. But they could not allow that, after the manifestation of Christ, the ceremonial law, which was the *shadow*, should be imposed as necessary; for that would have imported that the Messiah, who is the *substance*, was not yet come. And besides this argument taken from the law's being a shadow of Christ the substance, the Apostle argues from ⁿmatter of fact^o, in that they had *received the Spirit*, or the miraculous power and gifts of the Spirit, not *by the works of the law*, but *by the hearing of faith*, the hearing and embracing the doctrine of faith in Christ to which the law was to give place. [Note here, those (whether Jews or Gentiles) who, being converted Christians, did yet plead for imposing the observances of the Mosaical law, are termed Judaizers, or Judaizing Christians, by the ^pancients; and therefore are so called in some of the following papers.]

These two last remarks explain what St. Paul means by saying, that we are *justified by faith, not by works, or without the deeds of the law*^q, namely, not that good works are unnecessary for Christians to salvation; for we have seen in Christ's sermon, and other parts of the Gospel, that it is in vain to hope for acceptance, without doing the will of our heavenly Father: but when the Apostle opposes works to faith, by works sometimes he means the merit of obedience, by virtue of any covenant of works, which neither Jew nor Gentile can boast of, being all sinners; and what good is done

^m Acts xvi. 3. and xx. 20, &c. 1 Cor. ix. 20. ⁿTo the same purpose Just. Martyr argues against the Jews, in that the Spirit did no more visibly operate among them, but in the Christian church. Trypho, p. 248, 264. ^o Gal. iii. 2.
^p Ignat. Epist. ad Magnes. num. 10. *Ιουδαϊζουσιν*. Sic Hieronymus in Isa. liv. 1. et alibi, Judaizantes. ^q As Rom. iii. 38, Gal. ii. 16. and often to the same purpose.

is through the gift and grace of God. But very often by works, the Apostle intends the ceremonial laws and ordinances set down in Exodus and Leviticus; which the Jews so much depended on, and so highly valued. And therefore it is observable, that the works which St. Paul excludes from justification, are by him styled either simply *works*, or else *works of the law*, but never *good works*: of these last he says on the contrary, *We are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them*^r. And when the Apostle saith, *faith* justifies, he does not mean a bare believing the truth of Christianity without a holy life; but thus, that we ought not to pretend to justification by virtue of any covenant of works, and the merit of them, nor depend on the law of Moses after the manner of the Jews; but if we believe in Christ, and take him for our Lord, by living according to the Gospel, this will justify us, or make us accepted with God for eternal salvation; or, in the Apostle's word's^s, *in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love*.

Again; hence we see how to reconcile St. Paul and St. James, though they seem to differ. For when St. Paul saith, that *we are justified by faith without the deeds of the law*, he is disputing against Heathens, and the unbelieving Jews and Judaizers, and means such a faith as hath been mentioned, that is, believing in Christ, and taking him for our Lord, by living as he hath taught us, without the pretence of the merit of works, and especially the works of the Jewish ceremonial law: and when St. James saith that *faith without works is dead*^t, he is disputing against other sort of adversaries than St. Paul did, *viz.* such heretics of his time, who denied the necessity of good works, as if only their belief in Christ would save them; and therefore he by works means the works enjoined by Christ and his apostles in the Gospel, as the condition on our part; without which our faith is dead, and prevails nothing. So that both the propositions are true,

^r Eph. ii. 9, 10.^s Gal. v. 6.^t James ii. 14.

faith without works justifies us, and faith without works will not justify us. But then we must observe, that St. Paul and St. James are disputing about two different things; St. Paul concerning faith, as it is taken for the whole Christian religion, in opposition to any other, especially the Mosaical; affirming, that we are justified by that alone, not by either the natural or judaical: but St. James discourses concerning faith, as it signifies the profession of the Gospel, in opposition to the works required in the Gospel, or the duties of Christian piety; that faith or profession alone, he says, will justify no man before God, without a holy life suitable to that profession, and which proceeds from a true faith. And the term *works* is also used in different senses; faith without works justifies us, says St. Paul; that is, Christianity without pretence of merit, and without circumcision and the other Mosaical ordinances: and faith without works will not justify us, says St. James: that is, not without the works of a holy, religious conversation according to the Gospel; which St. Paul earnestly presses^u. Further, it is to be observed, that even the works under the Gospel^v do not justify us, (by procuring pardon of sins, and making us accepted with God,) as being *meritorious in themselves*; but as being the *terms* of the new covenant in Christ Jesus, and the *condition* upon which we are made partakers of the merits of Christ.

Seventh remark. There was a dispute at the time of writing the Epistles, about the Gentiles having an interest in the Messiah, and being members of the church of God, which hath been spoken of before in the Acts of the Apostles. Now seeing the Jews would not easily own the Gentiles' title, therefore the apostles frequently mention it^w. One particular sign of the acceptance of the Gentile Christians was, that the Holy Spirit, which formerly manifested himself among the Jews, had now deserted them, and was powerful among Christians^x, where the Apostle argues against the Judaizing Christians, that they *received the Spirit by the hearing of faith*, (the doctrine of Christianity,) not by the

^u Rom. xii. &c.
Eph. iii. 6, 9, 11.

^v Mentioned James ii. 24.
^x Gal. iii. 2.

^w Rom. ix. 10, 11. Gal. iii.

works of the law. To the same purpose the primitive fathers argued, as it hath been observed before. Hence the church of God is compared to an *olive-tree*; the unbelieving Jews were *the branches broken off*, and the believing Gentiles are the *branches grafted* into the old stock: so that properly it is but one church of the Jews and Gentiles, and Abraham is our spiritual father ^y.

Eighth remark. As in the Gospels, the expression of *Christ's coming*, &c. signifies his coming to judgment on the Jews ^z; so the like phrase in the Epistles is often to be understood to have relation to the destruction of the Jewish nation and people; whereby the first Christians, being generally persecuted by the unbelieving Jews, might be exhorted to meekness and patience for the present; for that in a short time those their persecutors should be disabled from doing them any farther mischief. Thus, ^a *Let your moderation* (yielding ^b temper, gentleness, or meekness, and patience) *be known unto all men: the Lord is at hand*, to put an end to the Jewish nation, and the Christians' troubles. So, ^c *Be ye patient, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh*. And, ^d *The end of all things is at hand*. ^e *As ye see the day approaching*. And, ^f *He that is coming will come, and will not tarry*. This interpretation of the foregoing passages, and the like, answers the objections of some, who, understanding them to have respect to the last day of judgment, have thought that St. Paul and the other apostles believed that the end of the world was nigh at hand in their times: but the Holy Spirit taught them to affirm the truth; and St. Paul himself intimates ^g, that the day of Christ was not nigh *at hand*. Again, they knew that Jerusalem was to be destroyed, and that the Gospel should be planted among the Gentiles, and that the Jews should be converted. And farther, St. Paul speaks of his own death ^h, and consequently, they did not believe that the end of the world should be in their times. And as for the passage ⁱ, *Then*

^y Rom. xi. 17, &c. ^z See the seventeenth Remark on the Gospels. ^a Phil. iv. 5. ^b *ΤΟ ΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΟΣ*. ^c James v. 8, 9. ^d 1 Pet. iv. 7. ^e Heb. x. 25. ^f Ver. 37. ^g 2 Thess. ii. 2. ^h Phil. i. 20, 21. and 2 Tim. iv. 6. ⁱ 1 Thess. iv. 17.

we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds; he means those of the faithful, the church being one body, and those who shall be alive at the last day will be fellow members, and of the same body with us.

On the other hand, the phrase, *the day of the Lord*, and *the day of the Lord Jesus Christ*, in the Epistles, generally signifies the last day of judgment. So^a, *That ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ*^b.

Ninth remark. In the Epistles, there is often mention made of *prophets* and *prophesying*; which words are diversely used; (of which before in the seventh general remark on the Acts. To prophesy, not only signifies to foretel things to come, but to declare the will of God, and to expound the mysteries of the Scriptures, by the immediate assistance of the Holy Spirit^c, and sometimes to praise God with inspired hymns or psalms^d.)

Tenth remark. St. Paul often alludes to some customs that were in his time: so because the Jews (living in a hot country, as did the first Christians) generally plunged the person baptized under water, and then raised him out of it, he says^e, *We are buried with Christ by baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him.* And because before baptism their garments were put off, and afterwards put on again, the Apostle alludes to this, when he speaks of the quitting the old habits of sin, and entering into a new course of holiness^f, *That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, and that ye put on the new man.*

Again, Running races was usual in St. Paul's time, especially in the exercises and games celebrated at Corinth^g; therefore he compares our Christian conversation and gaining heaven to the running a race, and winning the prize^h. There are divers such allusions in his Epistles. Furthermore, it was customary with the rabbies or doctors of the Jews to interpretⁱ

^a 1 Cor. i. 8. ^b So also, 2 Cor. i. 14. Phil. i. 6. 1 Thess. v. 2. ^c 1 Cor. xiv. 3.
^d Luke i. 67. ^e Coloss. ii. 12. ^f Eph. iv. 22, &c. ^g Called Isthmia, from the Isthmus on which the city of Corinth was situate. See Hammond on 1 Cor. ix. 24, 25, 26, 27. ^h 1 Cor. ix. 24, &c. ⁱ Maimon. Mor. Nevoeh. pars iii. c. 43. Grot. in Galat. iv. 24.

the holy Scriptures of the Old Testament by a figure, which is called an allegory, when one thing is expressed in words, and another is meant; or whereby something more is understood than is expressed. Thus it was expressed by the Jews, that in the histories of the Old Testament there is, besides the historical sense, another to be understood, which is more eminent and spiritual, and which is represented by such a history. Accordingly the Apostle understands by Abraham's two wives, the two covenants; viz. by Agar (the bond-woman) and her son, that of the old law; and by Sarah (the free-woman) and her son, that under the Gospel^k.

Eleventh remark. People's saluting each other with a kiss was a common expression of mutual kindness in the first times of the Gospel^l; and therefore, to preserve the sense of mutual kindness and charity in the first Christians, the apostles enjoined the *holy kiss*, or *the kiss of charity*^m, at the end of the public prayers, and before the sacrament, which then was a constant part of the public worship. The clergy saluted their bishop, and the men each other of their sex, and the women of theirsⁿ; whereby the whole assembly testified their good will, and that they were in charity with each other.

Twelfth remark. There were generally in the eastern countries, not as with us, covenanted servants, but slaves, who were bought and sold in the market: thus Joseph's brethren sold him to the merchants^o; to which Christ alludes in the parable of the servant, who had not wherewith to pay his debts, *his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children*^p. To this also the Apostle alludes, *Ye are bought with a price (of the blood of the Son of God); therefore glorify God, &c.*

Thirteenth remark. The phrase^r, *in the latter times*, and *in the last days*, in the Epistles, plainly refers to the time of the Gospel, chiefly to Christ's first appearance, or the beginning of Christianity; for first, the same phrase in the Old

^k Gal. iv. 24. See also 1 Cor. v. 7, 8. and x. 1—5. ^l See Luke vii. 45. ^m Rom. xvi. 16. 1 Cor. xvi. 20. 1 Pet. v. 14. ⁿ Just. Martyr. Apol. i. §. 85. edit. Grabe, compared with Constituciones Ap. l. viii. c. 11. and Grotius in Rom. xvi. 16. ^o Gen. xxxvii. 28. See Lev. xxv. 39. ^p Matt. xviii. 25. ^q 1 Cor. vi. 20. ^r See the end of the fourth remark on the prophets.

Testament is understood by the ancient Jews^r to import the days of the Messiah, and to be of the same signification with the word *afterward* in Joel^s; *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, &c.* which St. Peter quoting, expresses by *the last days*; '*This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, &c.* which both assures us, that *afterward* in Joel, is the same with *the last days* in the Acts, and also infallibly directs us to the time expressed by *the last days*, when this promise was to be fulfilled, *viz.* in the days of the Messiah, the time when Christ's kingdom, or the Christian church, was erected. Accordingly, St. Paul, having mentioned some things which *the Spirit speaketh expressly*, or plainly, were to come to pass *in the latter times*^v, bids Timothy *put the brethren, then living, in remembrance of them*^w, which therefore must be at the time when he wrote^x. Here also it may be remarked, that although the expression, *the last days*, imports the time of the Messiah, yet it is not always limited to signify only his first appearance, but, with respect to the dispensation of Moses, it imports all the time from the first appearance of Christ to the day of judgment; in this sense the prophecy may be understood in Hosea^y; *Afterwards the children of Israel shall seek the Lord their God, and David their king*, (that is, say the Jews^z, Messiah the son of David.) *in the latter days*^z: whence, by the way, we may expect, that, howsoever some of the prophecies of that abundance of peace and happiness which is promised under the Messiah, are not as yet accomplished; yet that it is sufficient, if they are made good in any part of the days of the Messiah, though towards the end thereof.

Fourteenth remark. The times of writing the Epistles are somewhat uncertain; most of them are accounted to have been written in about thirteen years space, *viz.* from the year 52, (that is, nineteen years after our Saviour's ascension,)

^r R. D. Kimchi apud Pocock in Mic. ix. 1. and Joel ii. 29. ^s Chap. ii. 28.
^t Acts ii. 16, 17. ^v 1 Tim. iv. 1. ^w Ver. 6. ^x See also Heb. i. 1, 2, James v. 3. ^y Hosea iii. 5. ^z Pocock in loc. ^z See also 2 Pet. iii. 3.

to the year 65^a, and before the destruction of Jerusalem, in the following order: 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Romans, Galatians, James, 1 Peter, Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, Hebrews, Titus, and 1 Timothy: two of the Epistles, *viz.* 2 Timothy and 2 Peter, when the time of that destruction was near approaching: the Epistle of Jude, and the three Epistles of St. John, after Jerusalem was destroyed.

Fifteenth remark. The Epistle of St. James, the first and second of St. Peter, the first of St. John, and that of St. Jude, are called *General Epistles*; because not written to any particular church or country where the Christians inhabited, but in general, to those who were *scattered abroad*; several copies thereof being dispersed into different places, and especially amongst the dispersed Jewish converts, being as it were circular Epistles.

Sixteenth remark. St. Paul, in the beginning of divers of his Epistles, writes to the first Christians by the name of ^b *saints*: which term, in many places, does not import that all so called were inwardly sanctified and holy; but is of as large signification as the word *Christians*, in opposition to the unconverted Jews and Heathens, and is the same with St. Peter's expression ^c, *those who have obtained like precious faith with us*, that is, all professed Christians. The term *holy*, or *saints*, in this sense, seems to be borrowed from the Jews, who had been an holy people, separated by God from the rest of the world, and so styled themselves holy or pure, and the Gentiles impure.

Thus much for the general remarks on the Epistles. Next we are to enquire into the design and meaning of each particular Epistle, to the intent that whenever any part or chapter thereof shall be perused, the reader, by first looking over the account herein given of that particular Epistle which he is about to read, and considering the chief scope thereof, may the easier comprehend what is read, and know what use to make of it.

^a Dr. Mill, Prolegom. p. 1, &c. ^b Lightfoot in 1 Cor. vii. 10. ^c 2 Pet. i. 1.

Design of the Epistle to the Romans, or the Church of Christ at Rome.

THIS is placed first, not for that the church of Rome in those days was esteemed the mother church, or the bishop of it the supreme or head over all the Christian church; but because the city of Rome was the chief city where the emperor lived. St. Paul wrote this Epistle when he was at Corinth, a city of Greece; for he commendeth to them Phœbe of Cenchrea, which was a part of Corinth^e: he had not then been at Rome himself^f; but understood that the Gospel was planted there by some others, and that the church there consisted of Jews mixed with some Gentiles^g. How so many Jews came to be at Rome, see before concerning the dispersions, in the fourth general remark on the Acts.

The design of the Epistle appears to be this, *viz.* to shew the excellency of the Christian belief, and the necessity all mankind lie under of embracing the Gospel, which is *the power of God to salvation, both to the Jews and Gentiles*. Particularly, in the four first chapters, after a salutation, and some expressions of kindness, it is shewn, first, that the Gentiles were in a lost condition as to themselves; they abused the light of nature, when the very works of God which are seen declare him to be the true God, who is the Maker of all things; yet they were idolatrous, and worshipped and served the *creature more than the Creator*, and gave themselves to all impiety; so they were all under sin, and came *short of the glory of God*. And as for the Jews, they depended on their circumcision, (the seal of God's covenant,) and other observances of the law of Moses; but, first of all, they were breakers and transgressors of that law, and so could not on the account of it be righteous or acceptable with God; but were inexcusable in judging and condemning the Gentiles, for transgressing the law of nature, when themselves were transgressors both against the natural and their own Mosaical law. Secondly, It is not circumcision, or other

^e Chap. xvi. 1.

^f Chap. i. 15.

^g Chap. i. 13.

observances of the law of Moses, nor the merit of any good works whatever, which justifies, (that is, renders a man safe in respect of Divine justice, and makes him accepted with God,) but the free grace and mercy of God in entering into a covenant with us in Christ Jesus: it is true, that the Jews had some advantage, in being *entrusted with the oracles*, or revealed will of God, which the rest of mankind were not; nevertheless, the Gentiles were now capable of justification as well as the Jews, by faith, or according to the terms of the Gospel. The Apostle instances in Abraham the father of the faithful: now the faithful are justified in that manner as he their spiritual father was; but Abraham was justified, or received into favour with God, not by virtue of any covenant of works made with him, like those in the time of Moses, or his merit in performing them; but God out of his free grace made Abraham promises of blessings, and that before he was circumcised; he trusting upon those promises was justified or accepted with God: in like manner, we are *justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ*; God having of his own free goodness offered a new covenant in Christ; and if we embrace the Christian religion, and duly receive the promises and precepts of the Gospel, conforming ourselves thereto, this is faith in Christ, and what will justify us, or make us accepted with God.

Furthermore, the Apostle answers the Jewish objection concerning Abraham's seed after the flesh, and proves that believers in Christ, though they be not natural Jews, are yet by faith the *spiritual children* of Abraham, according to God's eternal purpose, and partakers of the promises. This is the substance of the four first chapters.

Afterwards, the Apostle proceeds, chap. v. to shew the benefit we have, being justified, or received into God's favour by faith in Christ, according to the terms of the Gospel, (of which we have more cause to boast than the Jews can have of their privileges,) *viz.* peace and reconciliation with the Father, a joyful hope of glory, (though at present under tribulation, and the sweet influence of the Holy Spirit, working a sense of the love of God in our hearts; so that as the first man

Adam was the fountain of ^h sin and death, in respect to *all men*; so the second man Christ is the fountain of pardon and life for all, both Jews and Gentiles: but then, as the Apostle goes onⁱ, since we are all thus accepted, not for works, but through grace and favour, (which is manifested the more by our sins and unworthiness,) it is not to be understood, that, under pretence of giving opportunity for the more favours, we may sin the more; for our very admittance into his grace by baptism supposes a being dead to all habits of sin, as Christ died for sin, and leading a new life of virtue, as Christ rose from the dead.

Then^k, the Apostle pursues the former subject, and shews, that all persons, and particularly the Jews, are now in Christ as free from the law, in the manner it was given by Moses, as much as a wife is freed from subjection to a husband that is dead: forasmuch as the law, *the oldness of the letter*, could not enable to subdue sin, and *bring forth* acceptable *fruit unto God*, in such manner as when we are guided by *the newness of the Spirit*, the grace and Spirit of Christ under the Gospel: however, the law in itself, is not the cause of sin, though it shews what is sin; but a man's own lusts make him desirous of what the law shews to be evil; and so he sees and knows good, and in his mind and judgment desires it; but he is *sold under sin*, becomes a slave to his corruptions. Here the Apostle describes, in his own person, (to take off the harshness and invidiousness of the sentence, and to render it less offensive,) what seems to be meant, not of himself, or any other having grace^l and God's Spirit; but the carnal man, considered in his own natural state, whilst under the Law, without the grace of the Holy Spirit under the Gospel^m.

Afterwardsⁿ, the Apostle declares the safety and comfort of those, who, being through faith the members of Christ's

^h The Apostle says, ver. 19. *Many shall be made righteous*; that is, not actually so, but placed in a state of, or dealt with as righteous, being justified and accepted in Christ; so, *all have sinned*, ver. 12. and *made sinners*, ver. 19. that is, dealt with as sinners, or become mortal. ⁱ Chap. vi. ^k Chap. vii. ^l Grotius and Hammond in Rom. vii. 7. ^m Such a way of speaking see 1 Cor. vi. 12, 15. and xiii. 2. Eph. ii. 3. ⁿ Chap. viii.

church, live according to the Gospel, and subdue their lusts through the Spirit and grace of Christ, and are made *the children of God*, and *heirs* of glory; which the law, as is said before, did not afford sufficient power for. All such Christians ought to be patient under troubles, which shall *work together for their good*, and comfortably hope in God, forasmuch as it is the *purpose* or decree of God to save all those, who, being *called* by the preaching of the Gospel, should embrace it, and live according to it; as the same Apostle in like manner expresses himself, 2 Tim. i. 9. *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began*; and therefore God having *foreknown*, (or approved of them as such^o,) hath *predestinated*, or fore-appointed them *to be conformed*, or make like unto his Son here, in patience and holiness; and hereafter, in bliss and glory; which last nothing shall prevent or *separate* them *from*, they being such who truly *love God*, and express that love by *keeping his commandments*.

As for the unbelieving Jews^p, who, after all, expected to be justified by the works of the law, and not through faith in Christ, the Apostle expresses great tenderness for them, as being a Jew himself, and therefore calls them *brethren according to the flesh*, and reckons their privileges^q; yet for their stubbornness he observes, that God had rejected them in a great measure, and owned the Gentiles; who, though not the natural, are yet the spiritual seed of Abraham, and accounted the *children of the promise*, according to his own free grace and mercy: so, though Ishmael was Abraham's son, and elder than Isaac, yet the promise made to Abraham and his son belonged to Isaac and his posterity. Again, though Esau was Isaac's first-born, yet the seed of Jacob, who was the younger, inherited the promise. In like manner, God doth not bind himself to the Jews only, by reason of their privilege of having Abraham to their father; but may, if he pleases, cast them off for their unbelief and hardness of heart, and receive the Gentiles.

^o Psal. i. 6.^p Chap. ix.^q Ver. 4, 5.

Nor is it strange that God should give up the Jews to the hardness of their hearts; for the Scripture acquaints us^r, that he had dealt so with Pharaoh, who often had hardened his own heart: yet God *raised him up*, that is, to be king of Egypt, or *made him to stand*, prolonged his life, notwithstanding the plague of boils, that at last the power and glory of God might be more eminently shewn in his destruction in the Red-sea. So the Jews had often been pardoned, notwithstanding their idolatries; but now since they hardened themselves against Christ the Messiah, God had cast them off, and would shew mercy to the Gentiles, as the prophets Hosea and Isaiah had foretold: for God may dispense his favours as he pleases, like as a potter makes, as he pleases, one part of the clay serve for a vessel of nobler use, and the other for a meaner.

After all, the Apostle declares^t, that the whole body of the Jews were not so cast off, but that he prayed for their conversion; and those who should quit their dependence on the law, and *confess with their mouth the Lord Jesus*, and *believe* in him, might be saved; and there were even then *a remnant* of such, and there would be, in time to come, a greater conversion of them: therefore the Gentiles ought not to insult over the Jews; but remember that the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who were the *first fruits* of the root, were *holy*, or owned by, and separated to God; and therefore the whole *lump* or *branches*, the body of the Jews, (their offspring), may be so too: wherefore the Gentiles should look on the Jews as the *natural branches*, and themselves as *grafted* on their stock. Finally, the Apostle shews, that God is ready to have mercy on all that believe in Christ, *both Jews and Gentiles*.

Thus much seems to be the chief design of this Epistle, from the beginning to the end of the eleventh chapter. Thence to the end of the Epistle the Apostle instructs them in the duties of a holy life, and earnestly presses the observance of

^r Ver. 17, &c.

^s So it is in the original Hebrew of Exod. ix. 16. which the Apostle here quotes. See Hammond in Rom. ix. 17.

^t Chap. x. xi.

true Christian behaviour; such as their employing their several gifts and faculties to the good of the whole church; brotherly love, lowly-mindedness, peace and gentleness even towards enemies, leaving vengeance to God; subjection to kings and governors, avoiding impure and debauched practices, and bearing with each other, especially at that time with those converted Jews^u, who were sincere Christians, but yet weak and scrupulous, as to some things enjoined by the law of Moses; namely, the observation of the Jewish festival days, making distinction between the clean and the unclean meats expressed in Moses's law, which they thought they were still bound to, as also to a conscientious abstaining from meats that had been offered to idols. These persons were not to be despised, but received, and borne with till they were better instructed; and the confirmed Christians would do best not always to use their liberty, in the utmost extent of it, in things indifferent, (that is, in such matters which the authority of God or man hath neither enjoined, nor condemned,) but to abstain from eating what others (however weakly and erroneously) reputed unclean, rather than ^xby using their liberty in eating what themselves knew to be harmless^y, to *put a stumbling-block, or an occasion of falling, in their brother's way*, so that, either by compliance or imitation, he sin against his conscience, or fall off from the Christian faith. On the other hand, these weak and scrupulous Christians ought not to judge others that were better satisfied: wherefore he exhorts them ^zto practise forbearance one towards another, after the example of Christ's behaviour; that all, both Jews and also the Gentiles, may be *filled with all joy and peace in believing on Christ*, who came to save both.

Lastly, Since he was particularly an Apostle of the Gentiles, he expresses the greater desire to see them; and having sent commendations to several of the church by name, and once again besought them to *mark and avoid* all that should *cause divisions* among them, he concludes.

^u Mentioned chap. xiv. ^x See on 1 Cor. viii. ^y See on 1 Cor. viii. ^z Chap. xv.

Observations on this Epistle to the Romans.

1st, THAT even by the light of nature we comprehend the truth of the Godhead, and many of his glorious attributes; *for the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead*^a. For instance, the works of the creation prove there is a God: we see many wonderful things in the world, but nothing can make itself; otherwise it will follow, that the same thing is, and is not, at the same instant; as being the producer, and so it is; and the thing to be produced, and so as yet it is not. Again; We cannot but observe, as well in the formation of our own bodies, as in that of other creatures, the wonderful effects of wisdom and contrivance of so many parts thereof suited to their proper ends, and the purposes for which they serve. But if they were so brought together by chance, the effect would, against all reason, exceed the power of its cause; and we may as well suppose, that rude heaps of timber, stones, and other materials, should all accidentally meet and raise up themselves into a regular building, as that the world was made by chance or atoms; and therefore there must be a first power, and that is God.

So also we come to know the providence of God, and his government of the world: for he that is the Maker, must be the supreme Lord, and so must have all power to govern and dispose of all things as he pleases. Again; No wise man would build a stately house, but would also take care to keep it in repair; nor would God create a world, in which are so many marks of wisdom, power, and goodness, and then presently neglect and leave it to itself. But in fact we find God doth not so; we see the sun moves on daily and regularly, the earth brings forth according to the seasons, the plants retain their usual taste, smell, colour, and specific virtues; the cattle increase, and bring forth after their kind; and we cannot understand how any of those would be, unless the same Divine power and wisdom which at first created, did

^a Chap. i. 20.

also uphold and govern the world. Some have fancied the distraction, which an infinite variety of second causes, and the care of all their concernments would occasion, to be an objection against Providence: but as we find among men, a person of larger capacities and powers can attend to many things without distraction, when those of weaker capacities are wholly taken up with one, or few; so if we conceive the Divine understanding to be as far above ours, as his power of creating the whole world is above our weak and limited power, we cannot think the government of the world any distraction to him. Lastly, As from the works of creation we comprehend the truth of the Godhead and a Providence; so we also know that God is wise, and powerful, and good, seeing those works manifest such infinite power and wisdom to contrive them, and such infinite goodness, to mankind especially, in making so many creatures for his comfort and refreshment ^b.

2dly, That this Apostle had been misunderstood in respect of justifying faith ^c without works, to the disparagement of moral virtues, and the duties of Christianity; whereas his great design was to take off the believing Jews from their relying on the merit of any works, especially on circumcision, and the other performances or works enjoined by the law of Moses; but not from discharging of holy duties required in the Gospel ^d.

3dly, That this Apostle's sense has not been rightly taken in another point, about the observing or the not observing days ^e, whence some are encouraged to slight the holy days anciently observed in the Christian church, and at this day in ours; whereas it is plain, that the Apostle meant only the Jewish feast days, which the weak Christians, newly converted from Judaism, were still inclined to observe. See also the first observation on the Epistle to the Galatians.

4thly, That none ought to encourage themselves, from the latter end of the seventh chapter, in doing ill actions on pre-

^b Compare Acts xvii. 24—29.
the Epistles aforesaid.

^c See the fifth and sixth general remarks on

^d Chap. iii. 20, 21, 28, 29, 30.

^e Chap. xiv.

tence of *not allowing* them, and because they perceived some struggle in their minds: for there may be indeed a strife between the corrupt nature and the motions of God's Spirit in a regenerate man; whose actions are, it may be, mixed with some imperfections, and subject to infirmities: but here plainly seems to be described the *carnal* man, considered as under the Law, without the grace of the Spirit under the Gospel; who, knowing good, and consenting to its excellency, is yet in danger of being a slave to its sinful appetites.

5thly, That raising sedition and rebellion against kings and governors, and encouraging schisms and divisions in the church, is directly opposite to the Christian religion, since the Apostle so earnestly and frequently urged obedience to governors, and unity in the church; assuring us, that whosoever *resisteth* the supreme *power*, resisteth God himself, and shall *receive damnation*; and that such as *cause divisions, serve not the Lord Jesus Christ*^z.

Design of the First Epistle to the Corinthians.

CORINTH was the metropolis or chief city of Achaia, a country in Greece. There St. Paul had planted a Christian church^a, having resided there, and in those parts, eighteen months, supplying his own necessities with working at the trade of tent-making, with one Aquila, a Jewish convert, who was at the same time at Corinth with his wife Priscilla. After St. Paul's departure, the Christians of that church were farther confirmed by one Apollos, a Jewish convert also^b. St. Paul being now at Ephesus^c, understood that the Corinthians (a rich people, and noted^d for pride and haughtiness) were much divided into parties and factions by some leading men amongst them, who opposed the Apostle; and that they were puffed up with a conceit of their wisdom, or heathen philosophy^e and eloquence. This gave occasion for what is said in the four first chapters; wherein the Apostle reproves them

^z Chap. xiii. 1, &c. and xiv. 19. and xvi. 17, 18. ^a Acts xviii. ^b Acts xviii. and Rom. xvi. 3. ^c Chap. xvi. 8, 19. ^d Grot. Præf. ad 1 Cor. ^e Περὶ σοφίας, chap. i. 20.

for their divisions and factious siding with some teachers more than others, and exhorts to unity and peace, and a due subjection to him, as an apostle of Christ; although his preaching had not been with their admired eloquence, and *the wisdom of this world*, but far above it, in *demonstration of the Spirit and of power*, and a discovery of the truest wisdom, *viz.* that of God, and such as the Spirit of God had revealed, and confirmed by miracles. For his part, he had laid the only sure foundation, that is, faith in Jesus Christ, the true Messiah; and if any man built on that foundation, *gold, silver, precious stones*, chap. iii. *viz.* sound doctrine, that would abide the trial, as gold and silver abides the fire, he should receive a reward; but whosoever built *wood, hay, or stubble*, those doctrines that would not abide the trial, but proved like wood and stubble, which the fire consumes, *viz.* such as consisted of curious questions and disputings^f, Judaical observances and traditions^g taught by the Scribes^h, or such like, this labour should be lost, as stubble in the fire; yet such a teacher, if he did it through ignorance of the simplicity of the Gospel, and meant well and sincerely, might be saved, though with difficulty, as a brand plucked out of the fire; for the Apostle assured them, the day would come, (whether that of Christ's coming to take vengeance on the Jews in the destruction of their city, temple, and nation, or the last day of judgment,) when all doctrines and works should be tried, as metals or stubble are by the fire: upon which he exhorts them all, both Jews and Greeks, who were called or converted, that they would not set up their own vain philosophy, or *wisdom of this world*, or any legal rites or Jewish traditions, above the plain truths of the Gospel, and that only solid *wisdom of God* preached by him; which some indeed called *foolishness*, but it should *confound the wise* among them. To this purpose he writes the four first chapters, concluding this part of his discourse with assuring them of his faithfulness in preaching the Gospel unto them, however discouraged by their behaviour; not without a mixture of threatening, to use the power of discipline

^f Chap. i. 20.

^g Lightfoot Hor. in. c. iii. 13.

^h Chap. i. 20.

Christ had entrusted him with, for the manifesting his own commission, and reforming the pride, and faction, and other irregularities of some among them.

In the next place ^b, he writes concerning an incestuous person, whom he subjected to the discipline of the church, commanding him to be *delivered unto Satan*, in order to his repentance; for by such delivering up, the devil had power to inflict bodily punishment by some disease, &c. on the offender, which the Apostle calls *a rod* ⁱ. He also reproves them for vexatious law-suits, and appealing to heathen tribunals, to the scandal of Christianity, and reflection upon its professors; telling them, *the saints shall judge the world and angels*, therefore small controversies should be left to their decisions among themselves: whether the Apostle meant by the saints judging the world and angels, the establishment of a Christian magistracy, and a power over spirits; or that they should be assessors with Christ at the day of judgment, is not evident. The Apostle proceeds to caution them, as against other vices, so particularly against fornication, which of all other Gentiles the Corinthians were ^k most noted for.

Afterwards ^l, the Apostle answers some questions they had proposed to him. 1st, Concerning virginity and marriage; those who, having the gift of continency, abstain from marriage ^m, are thereby freed from worldly incumbrances, or live *without carefulness*, and are more at leisure to *care for the things that belong to the Lord*, especially *in the present distress* or straits of the church. However, marriage being appointed a remedy against fornication, those who *cannot contain* should marry; and the husband or wife converted should not forsake either, though unconverted, because the conversion of one of them renders their *children holy* ⁿ, sanctifies their offspring, that is, entitles them to the Gospel covenant; but *if the unbelieving depart, let him depart*; a Christian husband or wife is not under bondage in such case. [But it may be objected, Christ forbids divorce, except in case of

^h Chap. v. vi. ⁱ Chap. iv. 21. ^k Hinc Κοινωνία ζείν Scortari, Grot. Præf. in 1 Cor. ^l Chap. vii. viii. ^m Ver. 1, &c. ⁿ See the twelfth practical observation on this Epistle.

fornication^o; it is answered, St. Paul is speaking of a voluntary departing of the unbeliever, and that most likely on the account of the faith, and when it is probable the marriage is dissolved by the adultery of the unbelieving husband or wife.] In the next place, the Apostle declares, that their being *called*, or converted to Christianity, does not make any alteration in men's civil affairs, whether one be a freeman, or a slave, or servant^p.

And as to the case of those of either sex, who, according to the common notions of the Jews and others, esteemed it indecent^q to *pass the flower of their age* unmarried^r; if need so require, as that they cannot easily contain, it is best that they marry; otherwise, if one find himself to have a stedfast purpose, and there is no necessity, that is, perceives that he can refrain, he or she may better continue as they are. This seems to be the sense, (not in respect to parents disposing of their daughters,) if by *virgin*^s, we understand a person's own virginity, and translate ver. 38, not *giveth her in marriage*, but *marries*, as may be according to some of the best copies in the Greek^t. And this seems the rather to be the sense, because that this *decreeing*, or resolution, depends upon the *stedfastness* or purpose of one's own *heart*, and *the power* a person *hath over his own will*; which shews it to belong rather to the person who marries than the parent.

After this, the Apostle answers another question^u, concerning the partaking of the feasts in the idol temples, which he would have them abstain from. In the ancient sacrifices, one part was offered on the altar, the other eaten by the offerers: this was esteemed a federal rite^x, or a sign of friendship and communion with that god to whom the sacrifice was offered; so that such a religious feast was a communion or fellowship with the idol, or false god. Sometimes a part of the flesh offered to the idol was afterwards sold in the public market-place: now, as the Apostle argues, the meat is in it-

^o Matt. v. 32. ^p Chap. vii. 20, &c. ^q Eccus. xlii. 9. Grotius, and Dr. Whitty in 1 Cor. vii. 36. ^r Chap. vii. 36. ^s Ver. 36. ^t Γαμιζων, not *εργαμιζων*. Dr. Mill, in loc. ^u Chap. viii. ^x Mede's Christian Sacrifice, book ii. chap. 7. Bishop Potter's Church Government, chap. v. p. 260, &c.

self indifferent, an idol being nothing, as for any deity, (only a fiction, no real god.) and so could not pollute the meat. The apostles, indeed, decreed^z, that the Gentile converts should abstain from such meats, especially those who had been proselytes of the gate, possibly by virtue of one of the precepts given to the sons of Noah, (as hath been observed before in the Acts.) Hereby also they would not break the Christian union, by giving offence to the Jewish Christians, who made conscience of eating any such; yet the eating or not eating is not otherwise necessary in itself, or in the sight of God of any moment; however, since many of the newly converted did think otherwise, *viz.* that eating of such meat was an honour and worship to the idol, a knowing Christian (though he might be satisfied himself the meat was harmless, yet) by going and eating with such became *an offence*, or *stumbling-block*, or an *occasion of falling*, by betraying them into sin, who, (out of an erroneous conscience,) believing such meat to be unclean, were hardened by such an example, in partaking with the sacrifice offered to idols against their consciences; and therefore a good Christian is to take care how he use his liberty in things indifferent, where there may be danger of being the occasion of sin to another; as the Apostle himself would rather wholly abstain from such a dish, (as the flesh, or meat, which had been offered to idols,) how indifferent soever it was in itself, than wound the weak conscience of any Christian brother.

Furthermore, as the Apostle exhorted them to a care of using their liberty in things indifferent, so he tells them, how himself was careful in that matter^a; because, although the Gospel allows of a maintenance for the ministers thereof, (which he fully proves,) yet he himself quitted that privilege whilst he was amongst them, as he did in divers other respects condescend both to the Jews and Gentiles^b, complying with them in order to the promoting the Gospel. Here, upon the occasion of mentioning his own zeal, he stirs them up to imitate him in running the Christian race, taking a compari-

^z Acts xv.^a 1 Cor. ix.^b Ver. 19, &c.

son from the Isthmian games of running and wrestling, much used at Corinth.

And to make them the more diligent, and that they might not depend too groundlessly on their Christian privileges, but avoid the dangers by which others miscarried, and especially by idolatry, (which they might still be ensnared in, by going to the idol feasts of their Gentile neighbours,) he lays before them^c the case of the Israelites, and shews their privileges and advantages, in being all baptized into the covenant of God, in the cloud, and Red sea, and made partakers of the manna, and waters of the rock, which he calls *spiritual*, because they were types of Christ; and yet many of them, as they themselves might do, miscarried, by reason of divers impieties, which therefore he exhorts them to *flee from*, particularly idolatry, fornication, murmuring, &c. and if they were not wanting to themselves, God would protect them, and not suffer them to be tempted above their ability. Upon this occasion, he instructs them again (as he had done before^d) in their behaviour concerning things offered to idols^e, and shews, that although idol gods were nothing, (as to what the Gentiles believed of them,) yet since, under the names usually given them, as Jupiter, Apollo, Mercury, and such like, the Devil^f deluded mankind, and acted in and by the images^g; therefore, as they who offered the sacrifice did sacrifice to devils, so the going to their idol temples, and knowingly eating of meats offered to idols, as such, was a communion with the Devil, as it were feasting with him upon what had been offered to him, as hath been said, and utterly inconsistent with our communion with Christ in the holy sacrament: and although the meats offered to idols were indifferent in themselves, and therefore lawful when not eaten as such, in honour of and by way of partaking with the idol; yet they should be careful to give none offence by eating them, (when they were told, or knew them to be such,) neither to the unbelieving Jews, (who would thence conclude them enemies to the law and prophets, and imagine that Christians were allowed

^c Chap. x. ^d Chap. viii. ^e Ver. 15, &c. ^f Minutius Felix, edit. Leiden. 1672. p. 247, 248. et not. *ibid.* et Grot. in 1 Cor. x. 20. ^g Deut. xxxii. 17.

to honour and worship idols,) nor to the idolatrous Gentiles, (who might thence suspect their abhorrence of idols was not real,) nor to the weaker members of the church of Christ, lest they might be tempted by their example to eat those things, which themselves judged unclean, against their consciences: *The earth is the Lord's*, and therefore it both follows, that he can provide sustenance some other way, and also that whatever we eat or drink, or do, it should be all to his glory.

Afterwards^h, the Apostle treats of the decency and order of their public assemblies, that whereas the *man is the head of the woman*, as Christ is of the man, they should not confound the sex; but that the man should be *uncovered*, in token of superiority, and the woman *covered*, or veiled, in token of subjection; which decent behaviour ought to be shewn, *because of the angels*, who are esteemed to be present in the assemblies of the saintsⁱ: and for the same reason of decency, and a preserving of the distinction of sexes according to nature, the man should not wear his hair long, after the manner of women, or which becomes a woman, whose hair growing long, *is given her for a natural veil, or covering*^k.

The Apostle also directs a suitable behaviour in feasts of charity, and *the Lord's Supper*, which they celebrated unworthily, by reason of the divisions and factions among them, and the disorders in not staying for one another, and also intemperance, *not discerning the Lord's body*, not distinguishing this supper from other meals, nor behaving themselves suitably to the end of its institution, by a solemn commemoration of Christ's death. This is the substance of what is said to the end of the eleventh chapter.

In the next place^l, the Apostle discourseth concerning *spiritual* persons, and their *spiritual gifts*, such as peculiar wisdom and knowledge in matters of religion; the gifts of

^h Chap. xi. ⁱ Ham. in loc. ^k Here it is not so much to be enquired, what may be natural or customary in some countries, as for men either to have or wear long hair; but the Apostle's argument seems to be taken from the particular notion of the Corinthians, ver. 14, 15. That for a man to wear his hair long, *it is a shame unto him*; but that for a woman to have long hair, *it is a glory to her*. ^l Chap. xii.

healing, and of languages, and prophesying, &c. Of these he declares that every one had his proportion, according to the will of God, and they should not look on each other as single by himself, but one assist the other, and all join for the public good of the church, as *members of the same body*, each supporting and helping another; otherwise, without this unity, and also love and charity, which St. Paul hence takes an occasion to describe^m, the best gifts are not valuable. The Apostle adds a solemn charge against using the gift of tongues without interpretingⁿ, and that *women keep silence in the churches*, so as not to perform any ministerial office in the Christian assemblies, as a sign of their being under obedience or subjection to their husbands^o. Thus much from the beginning of the twelfth to the end of the fourteenth chapter.

And because some among them had learned from their philosophers^p to deny *the resurrection of the dead*^q, therefore the Apostle fully asserts and proves that doctrine^r, shewing, that we shall arise by virtue of Christ's resurrection, which is a pledge of the general resurrection of all mankind^s, and whereby Christ having subdued all the enemies of his church, *the last of which is death*, he himself shall *deliver up*, and resign his *kingdom*, or kingly power and office, as Mediator, to the Father; there being then no farther occasion for such a power or office: and then *God* (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost) *shall be all in all*, govern all things immediately without a Mediator for the future^t. Farther, if there be no resurrection, *what shall they do who are baptized for the dead*^u? Of which difficult text there are, among others, the following interpretations; *viz.* 1st, That to be *baptized for the dead*, signifies to be baptized in the person, or stead, of one that died before he was baptized; (but this being the practice^x of some heretics, it is not likely that the Apostle would raise an argument from thence.) Or, 2dly, Upon confessing^y the article of the resurrection of the dead, and consequently in hope of the resurrection: which interpretation

^m Particularly chap. xiii. ⁿ Chap. xiv. ^o Ver. 34, &c. ^p Grot. Præf.
 in 1 Cor. ^q Chap. xv. 12. ^r Chap. xv. ^s Ver. 13, &c. ^t Ver. 24, &c.
^u Ver. 29. ^x Chrysost. in loc. ^y Chrysost. et Ham. in loc.

seems most probable. And so the question is put, Why have they, in their baptism, made profession of the resurrection from the dead^z? The Apostle says, indeed, that *flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God*^a; but that is meant of flesh and blood, as it is now unaltered, and subject to corruption; and therefore he adds in the following words, *neither doth corruption inherit incorruption*: but the gross bodies of the saints shall be altered, as to their quality, at the resurrection, and changed into *spiritual bodies*^b. Whereby it is understood that they shall be free from their gross alloy, and be refined and made pure and bright like spirits, be *raised in glory*, fitted for the enjoyment of spiritual and heavenly pleasures; and also have no need of sleep or nourishment, like unto a *natural body*, nor be subject any more to sickness, death, or corruption; for *this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality*^c. And as for such who shall be living when the day of judgment comes, or found alive *at the last trump*, they shall not sleep, or die, that is, after the usual dissolution of nature^d, but shall be changed in a moment, or put into the same state with such who were dead, and are risen again.

Afterwards^e, he puts them in mind of providing beforehand a relief to be sent to their Christian brethren at Jerusalem; and to that purpose, that every one should *lay by him in store*, each Lord's day, in such a measure as God had blessed him the week before.

Lastly, Having exhorted them to steadfastness and Christian love, with submission to their spiritual teachers, as the best way to cure their dissensions and disorders, he concludes.

In ver. 22. of this last chapter, the Apostle pronounces a direful judgment against one who *loves not the Lord Jesus*; let him be *Anathema Maranatha*: the former of these two words signifies *accursed*, or devoted to destruction; the latter, *the Lord cometh*, that is, let him be accursed, the Lord cometh to execute vengeance on him^f.

^z See ver. 14, 17.

^a Ver. 50.

^b Ver. 44.

^c Ver. 53.

^d Ver. 51.

^e Chap. xvi.

^f Hammond in loc.

Observations on the First Epistle to the Corinthians.

1st, THAT the *fire* St. Paul mentions ^g cannot be a popish purgatory fire, because it is not proper material fire, but figuratively so called ^h; he shall be saved, *as* by fire. Again; this fire was to try not every *man*, but every man's *works* ⁱ, (for which, see what hath been said before on the first part of this Epistle.) Farther, the Scripture intimates no more than two states after this life, in heaven or hell; and two expectancies, of salvation or damnation; and divides all sorts of people into two ranks, sheep and goats: a third place or mansion is no where to be found in Scripture.

2dly, That it is of much concern, that every member of Christ's church do his duty, in preserving peace and unity amongst Christians, since the Apostle writes thus earnestly to the Corinthians, as well as to the Romans, on this subject ^k; and represents those who cause divisions as mere carnal persons, and their behaviour as contrary to the Christian doctrine, as it would be unnatural to tear off a limb or member from the rest of one and the same body.

3dly, That although the Apostle wrought with his hands at Corinth, yet he declared it to be the *ordinance of the Lord*, that the ministers should be maintained by those to whom they minister spiritual things, (either by public prayer, and praises, preaching, or administering the sacraments ^l.) The prophet Micah ^m complained, *the priests teach for hire*; but that was not because they had a maintenance, for God allotted the same, and a very large one too; for, first, they had the tenth part, which from the beginning God reserved to himself ⁿ, and then settled it on the Levites ^o; then another tithe of the nine parts remaining was to be spent at the tabernacle, of which the Levites had their share ^p; to which, if we add the first-born, with other offerings, the cities and suburbs appropriated to the Levites, it hath been computed, that a

^g Chap. iii. ^h As appears from ver. 15. ⁱ Ver. 13. ^k Chap. i. 10, 11, 12, 13. and iii. 3, 4, &c. and xii. 12, 13, 25. ^l Chap. ix. 7—15. See 2 Thess. iii. 8, 9. ^m Chap. iii. 11. ⁿ Lev. xxvii. 30. ^o Numb. xviii. 20, 21. ^p Deut. xii. 17, 18.

fifth part of the land belonged to them ; and the prophet re-
proved the people for withholding any part of these tithes
and offerings, because thereby they robbed not so much man,
as God himself ^q. But the priests were reprov'd, because for
hire they dared to teach, not what God appointed them, but
what best pleased the people, and for money scolded them in
their sins ^r. So the hireling in John ^s is not he who receives
maintenance or hire, of which Christ says *the labourer is
worthy* ^t, but he that intrudes, *whose own the sheep are not* ^u,
and designs not their good, *careth not for the sheep*, but in
danger fleeth, and leaveth them to themselves ^x.

4thly, That the Apostle's declaring against the philosophy,
or *wisdom of this world*, and *the excellency of speech*, or
eloquence, in the beginning of this Epistle, doth not thereby
disparage sound philosophy, human learning and wisdom, or
the gift of persuasive speaking, but such vain philosophy,
wisdom, and eloquence of the Corinthians, as rendered them
proud and conceited, and made them esteem the *preaching of
Christ foolishness* ^y, and oppose *the wisdom of God*, and the
mysteries of the Gospel ; as if it were beneath their deep
knowledge and lofty eloquence to vouchsafe attention to the
Apostle, when he preached Christ crucified, *in weakness and
fear, and much trembling* ^z. But when, on the other hand,
human learning, true philosophy and knowledge, and a fluency
of speech, are made to be subservient to the glory of God,
the Author of every good and perfect gift, and the demonstra-
tion of the Gospel, by promoting the great end and design
thereof, to the honour of God, and the good of souls : such
wisdom and learning St. Paul is so far from disparaging, that
he thanked God ^a, that they were *enriched in all utterance,
and in all knowledge* ; and he himself, as other inspired
writers of the Scriptures, very often illustrates divine subjects
by the ornaments of eloquence and figures of speech, to make
the greater impression on our minds. It is true indeed that
we ought to attend more to the truth of them than the orna-

^q Mal. iii. 8.^r See Mic. ii. 11. and iii. 5.^s John x. 12.^t Luke x. 7.^u Ver. 12.^x Ver. 13.^y Chap. i. 18, 24.^z Chap. ii. 2, 3.^a Chap. i. 4, 5.

mental expression; yet we here learn, that this last is often very useful to make the former the more agreeable and accepted: and farther, as for the study of philosophy, and a skill in nature, it is apt to beget in men the higher veneration for the God of nature. Some indeed, who had but a slight superficial knowledge, and looked only upon second causes, withal having proud minds and vicious inclinations, have become obnoxious to atheistical thoughts; and have fancied they could give an account of things, without having recourse to a creation or providence: but the more deeply men penetrate into the nature of things, they will be the more apt to acknowledge their own ignorance, and the Divine wisdom, power, and goodness; and consequently become the more disposed to a regularity in their minds and conversations, and be the more virtuous and religious. The same may be said of the *philosophy and vain deceit* this Apostle cautions the Colossians to beware of^b.

5thly, That the worshipping of images or idols is a very heathenish custom and sin: so the Apostle reminds the Christians at Corinth, that before their conversion they were *carried away to dumb idols*^c. The Papists pretend, that as their images are the images of Christ and some saints, not the idols of the Gentiles; so in their intentions, the worship which, for instance, is paid to the image of Christ, is referred to Christ himself, whom the image represents: but then, in the first place, whatever worship they give to Christ, they give it first to the image. *2dly*, This was the pretence of the Pagan idolaters, who did not make the image the last object, but fancied that their gods resided in the consecrated images^d. *3dly*, They ought not religiously to worship any image at all; for God hath made all religious worship peculiar to himself, and therefore he only is the object of religious worship^e; *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*. The representing God by an image, is a debasing him, who is a jealous God, as if he were a corporeal being, or

^b Col. ii. 8. See more of this in the third observation on the Colossians.

^c Chap. xii. 2.

^d See the third Homily of the Church against the peril of

idolatry. ^e Matt. iv. 10.

a creature like ourselves. When therefore God hath determined the way of his worship not to be by an image, his law is to be the rule of worship, and not our invention; especially when the outward act is expressly contrary to his law.

6thly, That it is contrary to the Apostle's direction for the public worship and service to use a language which is not understood by the people, since they cannot say *Amen* to what they do not understand ^f. This usage is also contrary to the custom of the ancient Christian churches, who worshipped God in their own ^g languages, as appears by the liturgies we have in the languages then generally spoken; which were Greek in the Eastern churches, and Latin in the Western. Among the rest, they of the church of Rome had their public service in the Latin tongue, because it was then their own language, and well understood by the people: but by the coming of barbarous nations among them, they lost their language by degrees, and yet most ridiculously kept up the Scripture and the public service in the Latin tongue, when it was not understood, except by the learned only. Which unreasonable practice is contrary to a decree of one of their popes and council twelve hundred years after Christ ^b; and, which is more, to that *edification* which the Holy Ghost enjoins ^l; and therefore the Apostle gives this reason against it ^k, *the other is not edified*. It is therefore in vain to pretend, as the Papists do, that it is sufficient to be present at the sacrament, or to hear mass, if one knows what is done, and in his heart contemplates the divine mysteries, and thereby raises his affections of love, hope, sorrow for sins, &c. whereby he may be a partaker of the prayers of the priest, and of the sacrifice which he is then offering, although he understand not the words spoken, (as it was among the Jews, while the priest was offering in the temple, *the people were praying without* ^l, and could not hear what the priest said:) as if St. Paul's discourse about edification, and the church service in a known tongue, and the constant practice of the primitive

^f Chap. xiv. 14, 15, 16, 17.
 divis. 9. and Reply, artic. iii.
^k Ver. 17. ^l Luke i. 10.

^g See Bishop Jewel's Defence, part v. chap. iii.
^h Concil. Lateran, c. 9. ⁱ Ver. 26.

church, had signified nothing ; and as if it had been no part of the public devotion, to join in the public prayers ; or, lastly, that a man may as easily raise his affections by words which he cannot understand, as by those he doth. As for the Jews, what the priest did in the temple at the offering incense, was peculiar to him as a priest, in which the people were not to bear a part with him ; and it does not appear that he then used any prayers at all ; but there are prayers in the mass which the people are concerned with ; and whatever devout thoughts they may have otherwise, they cannot join with the priest in offering up the same petitions to God.

7thly, The Apostle has explained the words of Christ, concerning the bread in the sacrament, *This is my body*; namely, that we are not to understand it, as if the substance of the bread was by *transubstantiation* changed into the real gross substantial body of Christ, as the Papists pretend ; for he calls it *bread* after consecration^m; *the bread which we break* ; and *we are all partakers of that one bread* ; andⁿ, *as often as we eat this bread*, which we cannot do till after consecration : but that such bread, duly blessed, broken, and received, is the *communion* (or communication) *of the body of Christ*^o; a making the faithful joint-partakers of the benefits of Christ's body being crucified on the cross, and his blood shed for our redemption. So that the bread is Christ's body only in a mystical and spiritual sense, that is, the sacrament of his body, as representing his crucified body, and conveying the benefits thereof to our souls. When Christ spake these words to his disciples, *Take, eat, this is my body*, they saw him alive before them, and therefore could not conceive that he meant his natural body to be both whole and living before their eyes, and yet broken and crucified, or given for them at the same time ; but they must know it was a sacramental phrase, like that of the passover lamb, which was a type of Christ^p; *Ye shall eat it in haste ; it is* (that is, represents) *the Lord's passover*.

8thly, That to worship the Host, or consecrated bread in the sacrament, is to worship a creature, which is to commit

^m Chap. x. 16, 17.

ⁿ Chap. xi. 26.

^o Chap. x. 16, 17.

^p Exod. xii. 11.

idolatry; for although it is by consecration sanctified to a spiritual and more exalted use than it was before, yet the substance of it still remains: accordingly the ancient Christians, as they expressed a great reverence for this sacrament, and apprehended it an unsearchable mystery, and on all occasions endeavoured to inflame their own and their brethren's hearts with the most ardent love of God for it, and the devoutest receiving thereof; and often say, the Eucharist is *the flesh and body of Christ, which suffered for our sins*⁴; yet (which is the main point) they plainly distinguish between the *material, bodily, and earthly part* thereof, and the *spiritual, or heavenly part*: the former, say they, we receive with our mouths, and that nourishes our *bodies*; the latter we receive by *faith*, and that feeds our *souls*⁵.

9thly, The Apostle absolutely forbids a woman to teach in the congregation, that she may not thereby *usurp authority over the man*; but commands, that the *women keep silence in the churches*; for it is not permitted for them to speak; and if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home, for it is a shame for a woman to speak in the church⁶. What the Apostle says of a woman's *praying or prophesying*⁷, cannot mean the performance of any ministerial office of praying or teaching in the congregation, or during the time of public divine service, for that would contradict what he says in the same Epistle, as above mentioned; but some extraordinary sudden motion or impulse of the Holy Spirit, as was usual in the first times of the Gospel; and even upon that account, they were not permitted to speak *in the churches*, or during the time of public divine service, though at any other time or place they might, with their head veiled. Whether *prophesying* there signifies to foretel something to come, or to expound Scripture mysteries, or rather to praise God by inspired hymns⁸, it is evident those gifts were extraordinary;

⁴ Ignatii Epist. ad Smyrn. §. 7. ⁵ Forbesii Instruct. Hist. Theolog. l. xi. c. 11, 15, 17. Archbishop Tillotson's Discourse against Transubstantiation. Jewel's Defence of Apol. part ii. c. xii. div. 1. Irenæus, l. iv. c. 34. fere ad hunc, et Grab. not. ibid. ⁶ Chap. xiv. 34, 35. See also 1 Tim. ii. 12. ⁷ Chap. xi. 5. ⁸ Mede, disc. 16.

and the Quakers cannot pretend to either of them, any more than to the primitive miracles of healing the sick, or raising the dead.

10thly, As nothing is to be enjoined or observed in God's worship, but what is in general agreeable to his holy word; so, as to the particular circumstances of public worship, *viz.* the place, time, method, or manner, &c. these are left to the prudence of the governors of the church, provided all that is ordained of these particulars be agreeable to the general rules of St. Paul here laid down^v; *let all things be done to edifying*; and^w, *let all things be done decently and in order*. Hence it follows, that the mistake of some concerning the ceremonies of the church, arises from their not distinguishing between the substance of worship, and the circumstances thereof; for although nothing can be an article of faith unless God has revealed it, and consequently it is only God who can direct in the substance of religious worship; as adoration, prayer, praise, the sacraments, &c. yet as to the time, manner, order, or method, the garb of him who officiates, and the like, these are only circumstances, indifferent and mutable in themselves, and left to the discretion of the church, according to the aforementioned rule for edification, decency, and order, which St. Paul here appoints; and the enjoining these indifferent things, in compliance with the Apostle's rule, is not *teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*, because they are not enjoined as necessary or good in themselves, as the Pharisees esteemed their traditions to be; but only as the Holy Ghost directs, as tending to edifying, decency, and order^x. The Scripture no where says, that nothing is to be used in the worship of God but what is prescribed therein; and when the substance of Christ's institutions remains entire, the appointing circumstances is not an addition in the Scripture sense, provided those circumstantials are not disagreeable to the nature of Christ's institutions, and do not render any religious office the less acceptable to God.

11thly, The matter of prayer, and the ability of expressing

^v Chap. xiv. 26.

^w Ver. 40.

^x See the third remark on the Gospels.

it, either in known or unknown languages, in the apostles and first Christians, was extraordinary, as the other spiritual gifts of interpreting ancient prophecies, healing diseases, &c. and were afforded for two reasons, *viz.* to supply the present necessity of the church, and also to be for a sign and confirmation of the Gospel: this is evident from chap. xiv. where we find that some abused their *spiritual gifts* of tongues, by their prayers and hymns in the public assemblies, when none or few were present who understood them; this being so contrary to that decency, order, and edification, which the Apostle directs them in, as a rule for the regulating of their behaviour, and the exercise of their gifts in public¹, he forbids any one's praying or singing in an unknown tongue, unless the *meaning* were known to the rest, or himself or any one present *interpret* the meaning²; and then adds, *a What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also*, that is, so as to be understood, or to *teach others*^b. So that no one ought any more to pretend to the gift of praying with or by the Spirit, in the sense the Apostle here speaks, than of tongues, or languages, which he never learnt. The like seems to be the true sense of these words^c: *The Spirit helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered*: in which place the Apostle is speaking of those who had *the first-fruits of the Spirit*^d, that is, were endowed with the extraordinary gifts^e thereof^f. So that, as far as we can know, since miracles are ceased, the gift of prayer, which we can expect now, is properly that *compunction of the heart* in praying, whereby we may perform the duty rightly, by the assistance of the Holy Spirit: and therefore, when we perceive our minds to be possessed with deep impressions of the glorious majesty of God, his holiness and purity, infinite power, justice, love, and goodness to all his creatures, especially to mankind;

^y Ver. 26, 40. ^z Ver. 3—15. ^a Ver. 15. ^b Ver. 19. ^c Rom. viii. 26.

^d Ver. 23. ^e See Chrysost. in loc. and Hammond in Jude, verse 20. ^f Compare Eph. vi. 18. and Jude, verse 20.

together with an humble sense of our own vileness and pollutions, and of our necessities, and absolute dependence upon him; if from hence our affections are excited, and our hearts lifted up to God, through faith in Christ, with fervour, and affectionate reliance on his goodness, and entire resignation to his will, this is *spiritual praying*, whether we have gotten some form of a prayer by heart, or read the same in a book, or hear it read by others.

12^{thly}, The Apostle affords an evident argument for infant baptism^y: *the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean, but now are they holy*; that is, having by birth a title or claim to be admitted into the Christian covenant^z, which the children of unbelievers have not; as appears, because the Scriptures often understand by the *unclean*, the Heathens, in opposition to the Jews, who were the clean or *holy* people, that is, in covenant with God. So,^a *An highway shall be there, and it shall be called, The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but the redeemed shall walk there*^b. Hence the Jews are styled *an holy seed*^c. In the same sense the Jews, in the times of the New Testament, were wont to understand^d the term *holy*; for when a man and his wife, who had been Heathens, were made proselytes to Judaism, they were to be separated ninety days, that it might be known whether their children were begotten *without holiness*, as they expressed it, or *within*; that is, whilst the parents were Gentiles or Jewish proselytes, and so within the covenant; to which known and common sense of the word *holy* the Apostle here alludes. And thus St. Peter^e, where he observes, that the holy people, who had been in covenant with God, namely, the Jews, being cast off, the professors of Christianity were separated to be the people of God, and so became holy; *Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God*. And in this sense St. Paul shews in the forecited passage^f, that

^y Chap. vii. 14. ^z Which St. Jerome expresses by *candidati fidei*; apud Grot. in loc. ^a Isa. xxxv. 8, 9. ^b See also Isaiah lii. 1. Acts x. 28. ^c Ezra ix. 2. Isaiah vi. 13. ^d Lightfoot Hor. in 1 Cor. vii. 14. ^e 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10. ^f 1 Cor. vii. 14.

the children of either Christian parent are holy, or have a title to be admitted to the covenant of grace; and then they are as capable of being so admitted, and of receiving the sign thereof, *viz.* baptism, as the holy seed of the Jews were of circumcision.

It is objected, that by *unclean* is meant *bastards*, and being *holy* signifies *legitimate*: but that cannot be; *1st*, Because if both parents were Heathens, the children would not be therefore bastards. And, *2dly*, The Apostle is not there speaking of any political affair, as of bastardy or legitimacy, but for the satisfaction of the conscience of such a Christian man or woman, whose wife or husband was a Gentile or unbeliever; that the Christian in such case should not dissolve the marriage, because it was so far sanctified by one of them being a Christian, that their children were as holy, having as much a title to the covenant of grace, as if both parents had been Christians ^g.

13thly, Though St. Paul commends the Corinthians for keeping the ordinances, or traditions, which he delivered them ^h, yet this can be no plea for the superstitious traditions of the Papists, till they can prove them to have been delivered by the mouth of an Apostle, and received as such by the primitive church, as were the ordinances and traditions which St. Paul mentions.

14thly, From the direction ⁱ, *Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him*; many pious Christians, both in the ancient church, and of latter years, have kept a stock in a box or purse ^k for the poor, that might be ready as opportunity should be offered to distribute it; and have experienced a great conveniency in this method of charity, in being so far from grudging when a due occasion has been offered, that they have been rather pleased with an opportunity of disposing well what they have laid up for that purpose. And farther, hence we learn, that not only the richer sort are concerned in the duty of charity, but all Christians in one degree or other, (though the greater the ability is, the greater is the obligation to the duty, and the

^g See farther the seventh observation on the Acts. ^h Chap. xi. 2. ⁱ Chap. xvi. 2. ^k Κιβωτίον πινυτων. Chrysost. in loc.

more are the opportunities of performing it.) St. Paul here appoints that every one lay by in store, *as God hath prospered him*; and the measure of charity is proportioned *according to that a man hath*^l, and *the ability which God giveth*^m: so that when a poor man sees another to be in more want than himself is at such a time, either in respect to sufferings in body or goods, in such case Christian compassion, and the giving assistance, is the poor man's duty, and will procure his reward.

Design of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians.

ST. PAUL having understood by Titus (whom he met at Macedoniaⁿ) the good effects of his First Epistle to the Corinthians, in their sorrow, submission, and good disposition towards him; in this Second he treats them accordingly, although there were still some remaining that opposed him, whom he frequently takes occasion sharply to reprove, but at the same time so as not to discourage the rest. In this Epistle it hath been observed, and will soon appear to any one who reads and considers it with attention, that the Apostle, through his affection and concern, applies to them with great art and insinuation; by turns commending and threatening, frowning and smiling on them. And first of all, he encourages them in trouble, from the consideration of his own deliverance, and gives them an account of his delay in coming to them, that it was not out of inconstancy, but chiefly *to spare them*^o; for that having not heard of their reformation before Titus's return, he was loth to come to correct them, according to the power given him by the Holy Ghost, which would have occasioned an *heaviness*^p. He also gives order about the incestuous person mentioned in the former Epistle, who had been excommunicated, and delivered over unto Satan; that the censure and punishment should be taken off.

After this^q, whereas one principal cause of the faction and disorder among them, complained of in the former Epistle, proceeded from some false teachers having corrupted the Christian doctrine, and disgraced the Apostle, he vindicates

^l 2 Cor. viii. 12. ^m 1 Pet. iv. 11. ⁿ Chap. vii. 5, 6. ^o Chap. i. 23.
^p Chap. ii. 1. ^q Chap. iii. &c. to the end of the viiith.

the Gospel ministry in general, as being far above that under the law of Moses; and assures them in particular of his own sincerity and faithfulness, and the joy he conceived in their spiritual good, and their godly sorrow and reformation.

† He exhorts them to hasten their contribution for the relief of their poor brethren the Christians at Jerusalem, after the example of the church in Macedonia. On this occasion are mentioned many excellent motives and encouragements to the duty of liberal almsgiving, worthy to be often and seriously read by all Christians.

Then † he returns again to exhort them not to hearken to his opposers, those false prophets, who, by debasing his person and authority amongst them, were an hindrance to their edification. These slanderers oblige him to give some account of his own zeal in promoting the Gospel, and of his labours and sufferings for it, and of the favours he had of being wrapped up into the third heaven, where he had a glimpse of the joys above; nevertheless, he gloried most in the cross of Christ, and acknowledged his infirmities and afflictions, the *thorn in the flesh*, to be permitted, lest he should be exalted above measure. What was the particular infirmity or affliction here spoken of is not mentioned: it could not be the motions to lust, because he had in a singular manner the *gift of continence*†; nor would he have *gloried* therein, as he did‡; it was most probably some extraordinary bodily pain or disorder, which was visible and known‡, in which manner God sometimes exercises his best servants.

Lastly‡, he signifies his readiness to see them again: in the mean time he exhorts them to lay aside their disorders and factions, attended with debates and strifes, backbitings and tumults; and also hopes he may not find any but what do sufficiently repent of their fornications, uncleanness, and all other vices; lest when he came he should *not spare*. And as for a *proof* of his apostleship, which the false teachers demanded, that appeared even by themselves; and the effect

† In chapters viii. and ix.

‡ Chap. x. &c. to verse 14, of the xiith chapter.

† I Cor. vii. 7.

‡ Chap. xii. 9.

‡ Gal. iv. 13, 14.

‡ Chap. xii. 14, &c.

to the end of the Epistle.

which the Gospel had, since Christ was mighty in them, by his grace and the gifts of the Spirit so manifest among them. He exhorts them therefore to examine themselves, whether they were *in the truth* or no; and to lay aside all their prejudices against him, that they might be still *approved of God*; that so he might not be forced to exercise the apostolical authority, and inflict the censure of the church, or *use sharpness*; but if it should so happen, the main design would be not their destruction, but edification; concluding with a solemn charge, that they check all their old divisions, and preserve unity and peace among themselves, and then *the God of love and peace* would be with them. For all which purposes, he gives them that solemn benediction, *The grace, or favour, of our Lord Jesus Christ, the meritorious cause of our redemption, and the love of God the Father, and the communion, fellowship, or a partaking of the gifts and sanctification of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.*

Observations on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians.

1st, THAT liberal almsgiving is a proper Christian duty, which will be accepted and rewarded^a.

2dly, That if a man designs and purposes God's glory, and the discharge of his duty, he needs not be much disturbed at the disgraceful reproaches of ill-natured persons; since St. Paul, so holy and zealous for the general good of the church, yet could not escape backbiting and slanderous tongues^a.

3dly, That the Quakers' pretence of Christ, or *the Spirit within them*, in some extraordinary manner to enlighten and guide them by immediate revelation above all others, is by a mistake grounded on the words^b, *Know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you?* For the Apostle does not speak this to any single person, but to the church of Corinth in general; and the words signify *in or among you*; as when we say such a one is *in* our company, we mean that he is amongst us. So, whereas the Corinthians wanted *a proof of Christ's speaking in or by St. Paul*^c, he asks them, *Know ye not yourselves, that*

^a Chap. viii. ix.

^a Chap. x. 10.

^b 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

^c Verse 3.

is, by the miracles done among you, and various gifts of the Spirit conferred on, and also a spiritual life and conversation wrought in, divers of you, that through my preaching Jesus Christ is manifested among you, and may indeed be said to abide in many of you, by his grace and gifts of his Holy Spirit, *except ye be reprobates*, disapproved of God, and so have provoked him, either not to grant, or to withdraw these gifts from you. But then the gross mistake of those people is twofold; first, that they confound the two sorts of spiritual gifts, the extraordinary ones vouchsafed to the Apostles, and some first Christians, of working miracles, with those which are to continue in the church; and vainly support their pretences to the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, by promises peculiar to the Apostles and first Christians. And further, they make the Spirit to contradict himself, in particular by denying the two sacraments of Christ's institution, as it is revealed to us by the same Spirit in the holy Scriptures^a.

Design of the Epistle to the Galatians, or the Christians at Galatia.

GALATIA was not a particular city, but a country or province of the Lesser Asia, where St. Paul had preached the Gospel^a. He had, it seems, heard, that since his departure several *false brethren*, or Judaizers, had crept in amongst them, and, as in other places, had taught the necessity of observing circumcision, and the other ordinances of the law of Moses: to which purpose they vilified the person of St. Paul, as if he (who was the great stickler against the legal ordinances) had only received his doctrine from others, and therefore was not so much to be hearkened to as the other Apostles, who had been conversant with Christ upon earth, particularly Peter, James, and John, (who preaching chiefly to the Jews, might not be so earnest at first against circumcision, and the other rites and ceremonies of the law of Moses, the better to gain upon that people.) St. Paul declares^b, that

^a See the twelfth practical observation on the Gospels.

^a Acts xviii. 23.

^b Chap. i. to the 16th verse of chap. ii.

although he was not converted till after Christ's ascension, yet he learned not his doctrine from any of the Apostles, but by immediate revelation from heaven^c: and that he was an Apostle of Christ, having received a particular commission from the Lord Jesus for the conversion of the Gentiles; whose conversation Peter withdrawing from at Antioch, upon the coming of some Jewish converts thither, was *to be blamed*; in that he discouraged the Gentile converts, and too much complied with the Judaizing Christians.

And because the false teachers would persuade the Galatians, that circumcision and the other Mosaic rites were necessary, and which they were to be justified by; this the Apostle largely refutes^d. And first of all demands, whether they had not received the miraculous gifts of the Spirit when believing in Christ, and not whilst under the Law? And afterwards shews, that Abraham was justified by faith, and that believers in Christ are the spiritual *children of Abraham*, in whom *all nations* were to be *blessed*, Christ the Messiah being descended from him. Now the covenant was made with Abraham long before the Law was given: so that there is now no distinction between Jew and Gentile, but they are equally *heirs of God through Christ*: and there is no occasion for the converted Gentiles, who are freed from the heathen rites, to turn again to the like *beggarly elements*, or rites of the Law, as to observe the Jewish sabbath-days, and new moons, and yearly feasts.

This he illustrates^e by Abraham's two sons; *viz.* Ishmael, by Hagar a bondmaid^f, and Isaac, by Sarah a freewoman^g.

Ishmael was *born after the flesh*, that is, by natural generation, or course of nature, before Abraham was too old for children; but Isaac was by virtue of God's promise, when by reason of age his parents were incapable of children after the usual natural course. These two, Ishmael and Isaac, the Apostle says, were an *allegory*^h, or similitude, representing the *two covenants*; the one of the Law delivered from *mount*

^c See Acts xxvi. 15, 16. ^d Chap. ii. 16, &c. and chap. iii. iv. ^e Chap. iv. 21, &c. ^f Gen. xvii. 16. ^g Gen. xxi. 1, 2, 3. ^h See in part i. the third general remark on the Prophets.

Sinai, signified by the bondwoman Hagar, which tendeth to *bondage*, and answers to the *earthly Jerusalem*, or the Jewish church; the other is the covenant established by Christ, represented by the freewoman Sarah, and answers to the *heavenly Jerusalem*, or the Christian churchⁱ, and tendeth to *freedom*. Now we who believe in Christ *are the children of the promise*, and as it were of the freewoman, as was Isaac, and so are free from the yoke of the Law: we are therefore to *stand fast in that liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free*^k, for that faith in Christ will save, provided it be after the Gospel way, that is, joined with a holy, spiritual life, or, *which worketh by love*^l. For although the Gospel be a state of *liberty* from the bondage of the ceremonial law; yet not *for an occasion to the flesh*^m, to satisfy the lusts thereof, and to neglect the holy duties of Christianity.

To which purpose, in the latter part of the Epistleⁿ, he exhorts them to prove their faith in that respect, as shewing the proper *fruits of the Spirit*, by avoiding the *sins of the flesh* which he mentions, and discharging the duties of a holy and Christian conversation. Before he concludes, he takes notice of the reason why some Judaizing Christians were so desirous to have them *circumcised* according to the law^o, *that they might glory in their flesh*, in procuring them to be circumcised; whereby, for their pretended zeal in promoting the legal observances among the Gentiles, those false teachers might avoid persecutions from the Jews, who were in all places the violent persecutors of the Christian professors: whereas himself only gloried in the knowledge and profession of *the cross of Christ*, however it was so great a scandal to the Jews.

Observations on the Epistle to the Galatians.

1st, THAT the *days, and months, and times, and years*^p, which the Apostle reproves the Galatians for observing, were

ⁱ As Heb. xii. 25. *Him that spake on earth*, i. e. Moses, is opposed to *Him that speaketh from heaven*, i. e. Christ. ^k Chap. v. 1. ^l Verse 6. ^m Verse 13.

ⁿ From chap. v. 13, &c. ^o Chap. vi. 12. ^p Chap. iv. 9, 10.

the Jewish sabbath-days, (and the strict ceremonial rest thereon,) their new moons, and solemn feasts of the passover, and the like, enjoined in Moses's law^q, which were only shadows of Christ and the Gospel, and could not be effectual to their justification by Christ, but rather a hindrance to it^r. Besides, such observances might *carry off* the Christian converts to the Jewish religion, and cause them to fall from Christianity. Now this does not at all forbid the Christian holy-days, as the memory of Christ's birth, and death, resurrection, &c. and of the holy apostles and saints; the observance of which would tend to renew in our minds the benefit of our holy religion, and so keep us the more stedfast to it.

2dly, That *the liberty* which the Apostle here instructs the church to *stand fast in* is a freedom from the yoke of the old Levitical law, as circumcision, &c.^s and not, as many fancy, a liberty of choosing what religion they please, and renouncing subjection to the governors of the church.

3dly, That to indulge ourselves in the sinful lusts of the flesh, is to lead a heathenish life, and is utterly inconsistent with the spirit of Christianity, and the hopes of heaven^t.

4thly, That idolatry (which is the giving to a creature, saint, or angel, or image, religious and divine worship) is reckoned by the Apostle amongst the most crying sins of adultery, drunkenness, witchcraft, &c.^u

Design of the Epistle to the Ephesians, or the Christians at Ephesus.

EPHESUS was the metropolis or head city of the Proconsular Asia, (by which is meant a country on the western part of the Lesser Asia.) St. Paul had often been there, and had settled the Christian religion amongst them; which was from thence propagated throughout all that Asia^v. He being a prisoner at Rome^w, sent them this Epistle: the chief design of the first part whereof was to preserve them from the

^q Compare Coloss. ii. 16, 17. ^r Chap. v. 4, &c. ^s Chap. v. 1, 2. ^t Chap. v. 16, &c. ^u Chap. v. 19, 20, 21. ^v Acts xix. 10. and xx. 31. ^w Eph. iii. 1. and Acts xviii. 16.

Judaizers, who held the necessity of observing the ceremonial law, and to that end, to put them in mind of God's infinite love to them in their redemption, and of their glorious privilege of being Christians; whereby, though they were, most of them, Gentiles by nature^c, and so *strangers to the covenant of the promise*, which God made with Abraham, and his posterity the Jews; yet now they were of *God's household*, as well as the believing Jews themselves, according to God's *purpose from the foundation of the world*, which he had made known by the Gospel; an evidence or seal of which was their receiving the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit; and therefore there was no necessity for them to observe the law of Moses, in order to their justification and salvation, (as the false teachers pretended there was,) for they were *saved* by the *grace* and mercy of God in Jesus Christ, and not by *works* of the law^d, and they were admitted to the same privileges with the rest of God's church. This doctrine of the salvation of the Gentiles by Christ, he tells them, God particularly revealed to him; and therefore encourages them in their faith in Christ. This is the substance of the three first chapters.

Afterwards^e, he presses them to live up to the Christian profession, by maintaining unity among themselves, that every one's gift and office might tend to the edification of the whole church, (according to God's purpose in vouchsafing the gifts, and establishing the Christian offices;) and by *putting off the old man*, not conforming to that corrupted state we derive from the *old* or *first Adam*, by avoiding their old heathenish sins; as lying, wrath, stealing, filthy discourses, envy and malice, uncharitableness and variance, fornication and adultery, covetousness, and drunkenness: however, many of these might have been connived at, or allowed of^f, by their heathenish philosophers, yet they bring the wrath of God on the offenders. And on the contrary, that they *put on the new man*, conformable to that state of regeneration or grace wherein we are placed by faith in Christ, the second or

^c Chap. ii. 11. ^d Chap. ii. 8, 9. ^e Chap. iv. to the end of the Epistle.

^f Grot. in chap. v. 4—8.

new Adam, bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit in general, by a circumspect and holy life; to which they were the more obliged by that light and knowledge vouchsafed to them; and also by performing the duties of their particular relations, whether as wives, husbands, children, parents, servants, masters: concluding, that if they would stand fast in their Christian course against all temptations, their armour must be truth, righteousness, peaceableness, faith, hope, the holy word of God, and devout prayer.

Observations on the Epistle to the Ephesians.

THAT God's acceptance of us Gentiles, as well as of the posterity of Abraham, should engage us the more earnestly to cast off all vice, as what would deprive us of our privileges, and to be the more zealous to live answerable to our holy profession, and glorious hopes^g.

Design of the Epistle to the Philippians, or the Christians at Philippi.

PHILIPPI was an eminent city in Macedonia in Greece, where St. Paul had preached and converted many^h. They hearing of his imprisonment at Rome, made a collection for his relief, and sent it by Epaphroditus, who sickened at Rome, but recovered, and returned again to Philippiⁱ. By him St. Paul sent them this Epistle; in which he kindly acknowledges their respects for him, and for the Gospel; assuring them his imprisonment and troubles were a joy to him, because they tended, by his example of courage under them, to make the Gospel to be the more taken notice of, and furthered at Rome.

But the particular design of the Epistle appears to be the same with the former to the Ephesians; *viz.* to keep them stedfast in the true faith, both in respect to any persecutions they might suffer for the sake thereof, and also in respect to

^g Chap. iv. 17, &c.

^h Acts xvi. 12.

ⁱ Chap. ii. 25, &c. and iv. 18.

the Judaizing Christians; and, first, that they be not affrighted out of their holy professions in times of persecution, but stand fast in the faith; to which purpose he also very passionately, and with great earnestness, presses them to avoid dissension, and to maintain union; and to that end that they carry themselves humbly, and with lowly-mindedness one towards another, after Christ's example. This is the substance of the first and second chapters.

Then, secondly^k, he cautions them to beware of the Judaizers, who would plant the same evil doctrine there, as in other churches, concerning the obligation to the law of Moses, as to circumcision, and other Judaical rites, so often mentioned before. As for his part, none could lay more claim to the privileges which the Jews prized than himself; yet he accounted all such but *loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ*: he propounds himself a pattern for their imitation in this respect, and in promoting unity and a true heavenly conversation: and, lastly, expresses his satisfaction in their charity towards him, and concludes.

Observations on the Epistle to the Philippians.

1st, THAT a forwardness and disposition to relieve Christians in distress was the temper of the ancient and first Christians^l.
2dly, that the Holy Ghost hath frequently shewed it to be a matter of great moment, to avoid division, and to preserve unity in the church^m.

Design of the Epistle to the Colossians, or the Christians at Coloss.

COLOSS was a city in Phrygia, in the Lesser Asia. Though St. Paul had gone over all that countryⁿ, yet some believe he did not go to every particular city, and that he had not been at Coloss^o. That city had the Gospel preached to them by one Epaphras^p, whom St. Paul is supposed to have

^k Chap. iii. &c. ^l Chap. iv. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. ^m Chap. i. 27. ii. 1, 2, 3. and iii. 15, 16. ⁿ Acts xviii. 23. ^o From chap. i. 4. and ii. 1. ^p Chap. i. 7.

sent thither. The Apostle being a prisoner at Rome^q, and having understood by this Epaphras their state^r, sent them this Epistle, encouraging them^s in their Christian profession, and perseverance therein, after the same manner as he did to the Ephesians, from the consideration of God's love in making them who were Gentiles, and *sometime alienated*, equally with the Jews, *partakers* of salvation through Christ; and also cautioning them not to be deceived by those heretics, who corrupted^t the Christian religion by their pretended philosophy^u, containing a mixture of Jewish and Heathenish doctrines; who also imposed the observance of the law of Moses, as to circumcision, the Jewish festival days, new moons, and sabbaths, and unclean meats; and also on pretence of the majesty of God, and their own humility, pleading for the worshipping of angels, to procure them their mediators to God; and lastly, pretending a more than ordinary self-denial and abstinence.

Against these, and such like, either Jewish or Heathen ordinances, the Apostle cautions the Christians at Coloss^x.

Afterwards^y, he stirs them up, as before he had done the Ephesians, to a true Christian behaviour, by avoiding those their old heathenish sins he there mentions, that are contrary to a Christian profession, and labouring after such holy dispositions, as are agreeable to the Gospel of Christ; and also by performing the duties of their several relations, as husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants. He concludes with an exhortation to earnest and constant prayer, and with some particular salutations.

Observations on the Epistle to the Colossians.

1st, HERE again the Apostle very evidently explains himself concerning the case of observing days, and declares he means the Jewish ordinances of new moons, and sabbath days, &c. which were a *shadow of things* under the Gospel^z.

^q Chap. iv. 18. ^r Chap. i. 8. ^s Chap. i. ii. ^t Grot. in. c. ii. ^u See the fourth practical observation on 1 Cor. ^x Chap. ii. 16. to the end of that chapter. ^y Chapters iii. and iv. ^z Chap. ii. 16, 17.

2dly, That the idolatry of worshipping angels, under pretence of humility towards the great God, was the doctrine of the worst of heretics, who did not *hold the head*, that is, were not true members of Christ's body, the church ^b.

3dly, That the fault which the Apostle checks some of the Colossians for, in being *subject to ordinances*, and the *commandments* and *doctrines of men*, and going back to the *rudiments of the world*, and the like, consisted in this; namely, their subjection to the Jewish ordinances so often mentioned before, and the doctrine and discipline of some heathen philosophers and conceited heretics, who pretended to a more perfect way, and stricter abstinence than ordinary: this was not intended to disparage government, and subjection to the Christian church, or a compliance in what is decent, and for edification ^c.

4thly, Nor doth the Apostle condemn *philosophy* ^d, and human learning, as considered in itself; forasmuch as it is the great improver of our reason, and that which teaches us the knowledge of God and of virtue, as far as that arises from the nature of things in this world; insomuch that sound philosophy was, in the primitive times, often the ^e foundation of Christianity, and was with great success made use of by the ancients in defending it, and convincing its gainsayers: but philosophy is here spoken against, with respect to the abuse and corruption of it, as having espoused many fond and absurd principles, and abetted many undue practices; and therefore, the Apostle bids the first Christians *beware, lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ*.

5thly, To this purpose, (besides the medley of Judaism and Paganism, which was one effect of the vain philosophy of some heretics of those times mentioned in this chapter,) we may here reflect upon some other traditions of men, and rudiments of this world, which might occasion St. Paul to caution the Christians to beware of them: we read ^f of two eminent

^b Chap. ii. 18, 19.

^c Chap. ii. 20, 21.

^d Verse 8.

^e As in Justin

Martyr and others.

^f Acts xvii. 18.

sects of philosophers who encountered St. Paul, *viz.* the Epicureans and Stoics. The vain principles of the first of these were such as follow: they taught that the world was made by chance, and a casual concourse of atoms, (or small particles of matter meeting together;) that there was no providence of God, who would not trouble himself with men and their affairs; that happiness consisted in sensual pleasures; that there was no future existence of souls, nor any life after this. The other sort, the Stoics, pretended a fatal and irrevocable necessity of actions and things, and that good was not to be done for a reward. These last put on an affected gravity and unconcernedness at surprising events and misfortunes; and generally, the philosophers were a set of people immoderately proud, desirous of fame, and given to wrangling and vain disputings. These and the like, to be sure, were doctrines and practices not after Christ; but still they were the rudiments and principles of some particular sects and persons, and a corruption of true philosophy and learning; which, without that corruption, enabled many primitive fathers and martyrs (as hath been already intimated) to become, through the assistance of the Divine Spirit, glorious champions for the Christian religion ^g.

Gthly, That the strict observation of the duties of our several relations, whether as husbands or wives, parents or children, masters or servants, is one principal part of our Christian religion ^h.

Design of the Two Epistles to the Thessalonians, or the Christians at Thessalonica.

THESSALONICA was the chief city of Macedonia in Greece, where St. Paul had planted a Christian church ^l, which consisted of some converted Jews, and a great number of Gentiles, some of which are called *devout Greeks*, being probably proselytes of the gate ^k. That a great part were Gentiles converted, appears from the Apostle's saying, they *turned to*

^g See the fourth observation on the first Epistle to the Corinthians. ^h Chap. iii. 18, &c. ⁱ Chap. ii. 13. and Acts xvii. 1. ^k Acts xvii. 1—5.

God from idols^c. The Apostle understanding by Timothy their stedfastness, wrote this Epistle to confirm them in the Christian faith, which they had received from him, and in a perseverance therein, notwithstanding any tribulation or persecutions^d. (The Apostle might in particular mean that persecution, to which the unbelieving Jews, according to their usual manner, excited the Gentiles^e.) To this purpose, in the following chapters, he instructs them in a godly course of life, and comforts them with the glorious hopes of the resurrection, and of being *for ever with the Lord Jesus*: this should satisfy them in the midst of their concern for their deceased friends, especially if any were persecuted to death for the cause of religion.

He farther shews^f, that *the day of the Lord*, or the time of Christ's coming to judgment at the general resurrection^g, (of which he was treating just before in the latter part of the foregoing chapter,) was uncertain, and that it should surprise the ungodly world; but for those that are Christians, they need not be afraid, provided they lived as such, in that holy conversation, which he instructs them in, to the end of the first Epistle.

As to the second, St. Paul, in his former Epistle^h, had put the Christians of Thessalonica in hopes of coming again to them; but being prevented, he sent this second Epistle, much to the same purpose as the former, to encourage them in perseverance, and comfort them in their sufferings, shewing God's judgments on all those that *obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*, but the glorious reward which waited for them that obeyed.

And, because they mistook his former Epistleⁱ about Christ's coming to judgment, lest they should be shaken in mind, because it was not to be immediately; he shews, in this second Epistle^k, that (according as he told them formerly) that terrible judgment was not to fall on the ungodly, till after some things came to pass, he now mentions, *viz.* a great apo-

^c Chap. i. 9. ^d Chap. i. 2, 3. ^e Acts xvii. 5. ^f Chap. v. ^g See the eighth general remark on the Epistles, towards the latter end. ^h Chap. iii. 11.

ⁱ In chap. v. i, &c. ^k Chap. ii.

stasy or falling away from the faith, and the Antichrist (or grand opposer of Christ) being more plainly discovered.

Some^l by the *coming of Christ*, and *the day of Christ*^m, understand the coming of Christ to destroy the unbelieving Jews and their temple, of which they suppose the Christians might be over inquisitive to know the time; in which sense the coming of Christ is usedⁿ. But yet this passage seems to refer to the same time which the like phrase doth four times in the former Epistle^o; and that is to the day of judgment.

Afterwards^p, the Apostle returns again to encourage and comfort them; giving them some instructions, particularly to avoid idleness, and the disorderly behaviour of some busy bodies; and then concludes with a Christian salutation.

Observations on the Epistles to the Thessalonians.

1st, THAT the hopes of being with Christ for ever in glory, was enough to support the primitive Christians under the greatest sufferings; we therefore should often encourage and comfort ourselves with these hopes, and so look above the world and the troubles of it^q.

2dly, The Apostle's charge^r, *Prove all things, hold fast that which is good*, hath been misunderstood by some, to encourage a running after various teachers, and ways of religious worship, under pretence of trying all religions first, before they settle; whereas the word *prove* doth not mean to practise or experience, but particularly to examine and enquire into all the spiritual gifts vouchsafed in those times, as of *prophesyings* mentioned in the foregoing verse, and that according to the gift of *discerning spirits* then in the church^s. So^t, *Try the spirits, whether they be of God*. If this precept, *Prove all things, &c.* be understood in general, then it signifies, examine and try the truth of every doctrine or practice, how it is agreeable to the proportion of faith, the doctrine of Christ taught

^l Grot. Ham. in 1 Thess. v. 2. ^m Mentioned chap. ii. 1, 2. and in the former Epistle, chap. v. ⁿ Matt. xxiv. 2, 3. James v. 7, 8, 9. ^o Viz. chap. ii. 19. iii. 13. iv. 15. and v. 23. ^p Chap. ii. 13, &c. ^q 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17, 18. 2 Thess. ii. 16. ^r 1 Thess. v. 21. ^s 1 Cor. xii. 10. ^t 1 John iv. 1.

by the Apostle, and then *hold fast that which is good*, or agreeable thereto.

Design of the Two Epistles to Timothy.

ST. PAUL had taken this Timothy to travel with him, and to assist him in planting the Gospel^a. He *put his hands* on him, which some interpret ordained him, with the assistance of the presbytery^b; as afterward in the primitive church^c, the bishops ordained with the assistance of the presbyters. At length the Apostle is said to constitute him bishop at Ephesus^d, the metropolis or head city in that part of Asia, which is called the Proconsular Asia; and some time after that, he wrote this Epistle to him. He calls him his *son*, as being converted^e by him to the Christian religion, whereby the Apostle became his spiritual father. Timothy had been instructed in the holy Scriptures of the Old Testament, ever since he was a child, by his grandmother and mother, being both religious Jewesses, and also made converts to the Christian faith before him^f.

The design of the first Epistle appears^g, that Timothy might *know how to behave himself in the church of God*; that is, to instruct him how to discharge his great office, both as to his own behaviour, and also that of others, whether the inferior clergy or people; and how to order some part of the public service, by *supplications, prayers, and giving of thanks*; and warns him against some judaizing or other heretics and false teachers, particularly not to give heed to their fables^h and genealogiesⁱ, nor their doctrines *forbidding of marriage, and meats*^k.

There are three passages in this Epistle to be particularly considered. The first is^l, where the Apostle says that women should be in subjection to their husbands, because *the woman (Eve) being deceived, was in the transgression*; i. e.

^a Acts xvi. 3. ^b 2 Tim. i. 6. compared with 1 Tim. iv. 14. ^c Grot. in 1 Tim. iv. 24. ^d Euseb. Hist. l. iii. c. 4. Chrysost. Hom. 15. in 1 Tim. v. 19. Hammond on the title to 1 Tim. Cave's Life of Timothy. ^e Cave's Life of Timothy. ^f Acts xvi. 1. 2 Tim. i. 5. ^g Chap. iii. 14, 15. ^h See Grot. in chap. i. 4. ⁱ Chap. i. ^k Chap. iv. ^l Chap. ii. 14, 15.

being tempted by the serpent the devil to eat the forbidden fruit ^m, she was first prevailed on, and so became the means of man's fall ; but for the comfort of the female sex, he affirms, that the woman *notwithstanding shall be saved in* (or by ⁿ) *child-bearing* ; which may import, either that she should go through child-bearing pangs with safety, or else her soul should be saved by child-bearing, that is, by Christ's being born of a woman, the Virgin Mary ; whereby the same sex became also instrumental to man's salvation, as before in his fall to his destruction.

2dly, Among the characters of a bishop ^o, one is, that he be *the husband of one wife*, which may be understood as having but one wife at a time ^p, whereas the Gentiles, before their conversion, had sometimes two or three ; which they might be permitted still to retain, even after they were baptized, to avoid confusion, (for which of them could the husband choose to part with ?) though Christians were not suffered to be married to more than one, during the life of that one, after conversion : however, a plurality of wives was so far discouraged, that whoever had been married to more than one at the same time, while he was a Gentile, was not allowed to be put into the ministry, though he were a convert to Christianity. One objection against this interpretation is, that in this same Epistle ^q, a widow was to be chosen into the service of the church, being *the wife of one man* ; but a woman among the Gentiles was not allowed many husbands at once. It is replied, that here is a different case ; and that if the phrase in this last passage ^r cannot be so interpreted, it does not therefore follow that the other may not. Another sense of *the husband of one wife* may be ^s, as not having divorced one wife, and taken another, as was usual among Jews and Gentiles. And this sense agrees with chap. v. 9. for women were wont to divorce themselves, and marry another husband, among Jews and Gentiles also ^t. As for a third interpretation,

^m Gen. iii. 6. ⁿ Δια της τεκνογονίας. ^o Chap. iii. 2. ^p Gerhard. Loc. Com. tom. vii. de Conjugio, §. 214. Calvin in loc. Bishop Blackall's Serm. vol. iii. p. 319. ^q Chap. v. 9. ^r In chap. v. ^s Hammond in loc. Dr. Whithy on 1 Tim. v. 9. and on 1 Cor. vii. 11. ^t Ibid.

of not marrying a second wife after the death of the first, but continuing a widower; it is true, some ancient canons enjoin this to the clergy, (at the first, no doubt, by reason of the heathen persecutions;) but then the opinions and practice of the ancients varied in this matter; some understanding the place, of those^y who had more wives than one at a time, or had put away one and married another. However, it is certain, some very ancient Catholic bishops were twice married^z, after the decease of a former wife. And since the end of marriage is not only for the propagation of children, but also mutual comfort, and a remedy against fornication, it cannot be conceived why a first marriage should be allowed for such ends, and not a second; when there may be as much occasion, in order to such ends, for a second marriage, as for a first.

3dly, The *widow indeed*^a appears to be^b one who was altogether destitute, deprived of the help of husband or child, exemplary, pious, and devout; of sixty years of age, the wife of one husband, (that is, either who had not been twice married; or, as others, who had not formerly, before conversion, parted with one husband and married another, as was^c usual among the Jews and Heathen, as before observed.) Such a one was to be received into the roll or list of those who were maintained by the church's alms; and some of them were *servants of the church*, or deaconesses^d, who were to be employed for the relieving other destitute Christians out of the church's stock, and otherwise in the church's service: especially towards those of their own sex, as in sickness, or when they were baptized, &c. it being more decent for them to attend on their own sex on such occasions, than for deacons or other men to do it.

The design of the second Epistle is again to stir up Timothy to be zealous and diligent in his office, patient in troubles, and constant in the holy doctrine which St. Paul had taught him; as also to warn him against the false teachers, whether Jews or others, (as in the first Epistle,) of their sly behaviour,

^y Chrysost. Theodoret in loc. ^z Tertul. de Monogamia, c. 12. See more in Mr. Bingham's Antiquities, book iv. chap. 5. ^a Mentioned chap. v. ^b Gro-tius and Whitby in loc. ^c Ibid. ^d As Phœbe was, Rom. xvi. 1.

and their *foolish questions* and *fables*; and to instruct him further how to behave himself, in imitation of St. Paul's own example, *manner of life*, and *patience*, that at last he might obtain with him a crown of life; which St. Paul himself shortly expected; *for he was ready to be offered, and the time of his departure was at hand*^e.

The names of Jaanes and Jambres, two Egyptian magicians, *who withstood Moses*, (when he wrought the miracles before Pharaoh,) are not mentioned by Moses in his history; but they were ^gin some ancient records of the Jews, which were extant and known in the Apostle's time.

Design of the Epistle to Titus.

THIS Titus had been, it seems, converted to the Christian faith, or confirmed in it, by St. Paul; who therefore calls him his son, (as he did Timothy.) Afterwards St. Paul is said^h to make him bishop of the island of Crete. The design of this Epistle is, like those to Timothy, to direct Titus how to discharge his office in ordaining others, and in opposing and censuring gainsayers, or false teachers, and heretics; *especially they of the circumcision, with all Jewish fables, and foolish questions, and strivings about the law*ⁱ, whether of the Jews, or Judaizing Christians; and in teaching the people their duty.

Observations on the First and Second Epistles to Timothy, and the Epistle to Titus.

1st, **THAT** the government of the church by bishops was an apostolical ordinance, forasmuch as St. Paul placed Timothy bishop of Ephesus, and Titus bishop of Crete^k, as the ancients testify; and in these Epistles gave them instructions concerning the government of the inferior clergy, and the people in those churches; particularly, Timothy was empowered to discharge the office of a bishop, *viz.* to prove and

^e Chap. iv. 6. ^f Chap. iii. 8. ^g Grotius and Hammond in loc. ^h Euseb. Hist. l. iii. c. 4. Chrysost. Hom. i. in c. 2. Hammond on the Title. ⁱ Chap. i. 10. and iii. 9. ^k As it hath been said before. See also Dr. Cave's Lives of Timothy and Titus.

admit others to the ministerial function^l, to encourage and reward them^m, and to exercise disciplineⁿ. And likewise to Titus was given episcopal authority, to *set in order* affairs of the churches, and *ordain elders*^o. By this, such who conceive the order of bishops not sufficiently prescribed in Scripture, (and therefore conceive it not absolutely necessary to the church,) may see plainly that the offices in government, ordination, and the exercise of discipline, are directly prescribed therein, as belonging to one single person, (though they are more fully explained and cleared in the accounts of the primitive church;) nor is there any more reason to pretend that Timothy and Titus were particular and occasional officers, than that the Epistles, which were written to them, were only particular and occasional writings: but the Christian church preserving these Epistles, as of constant and perpetual use, did thereby suppose the same kind of office to continue, for the sake whereof those excellent Epistles were written. And we have no greater assurance that these Epistles were written by St. Paul, than we have that there were bishops to succeed the apostles in the care and government of the churches^p: and St. Chrysostom gives this as the reason why, of all his disciples and followers, St. Paul wrote Epistles to Timothy and Titus, and not to Silas or Luke; because he had committed to them the care and government of churches, while he reserved the others as attendants and ministers to go along with himself^q. Once more; “Either there was at Ephesus and Crete a presbytery, that is, a college of presbyters, with a power of ordaining presbyters and deacons without a bishop, or there was not; if there were such colleges with such a power, then was there no need of St. Paul’s sending Timothy and Titus thither for that purpose; but if there were not, then had Timothy and Titus the sole power of ordination in those places, by apostolical commission^r.” and even where there were presbyters already settled, as they were at Ephesus^s, some few years before St. Paul wrote to

^l 1 Tim. iii. 10. ^m Chap. v. 17. ⁿ Chap. v. 19, 20, 21. ^o Titus i. 5.
^p Bishop Stillingfleet’s Cases, edit. 2. p. 8. Bishop Beveridge’s Codex Can. Eccles. Prim. l. ii. c. 11. and Bishop Potter’s Government of the ancient Church, chap. iv.
^q Chrysost. Argument. in 1 Tim. ^r Reliqu. Carolin. p. 307. ^s Acts xx. 17.

Timothy. It is true indeed, that Timothy often accompanied St. Paul in planting churches, and the Apostle sent for him to Rome[†], and also charged him[‡] to *do the work of an Evangelist*, or a propagator of the Gospel in divers countries; yet that only shews, that Timothy was by the Holy Ghost employed in both offices at different times, *viz.* to propagate the Gospel, and also to govern a particular church; for it is evident, that the gift of government was distinct from that of an evangelist[§].

2dly, That the first Christians were subject to their bishops, and guided by them in matters of religious behaviour; otherwise St. Paul had in vain given Timothy and Titus those directions for government.

3dly, That to pray to saints and angels to procure their intercession for us, is against the Apostle's doctrine, who has declared, that as there is but *one God*, so *there is one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus*[†]. The Papists pretend, that they make the saints only mediators of intercession, as if they desired the saints only to pray to God for them; but their authorized catechism teaches, that the saints are to be prayed to, because "God bestows blessings on us for their merits and favour[‡]:" and their practice is accordingly; which makes the saints sharers in the mediation of redemption, and is the greatest affront and dishonour to Christ, by whose merits alone our prayers are heard.

4thly, That the doctrines of purgatory, (by which the Papists understand a purgation by torments, of such as indeed depart in the faith of Christ, but yet must suffer a temporal punishment,) and of praying for deliverance of the deceased from the torments of it, or for ease under them, are not countenanced by St. Paul's charitable prayer for Onesiphorus, whom they suppose to have been then dead[‡]; *The Lord grant unto him, that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day*. For, first, it does not appear certainly that Onesiphorus

† 2 Tim. iv. 9. ‡ 2 Tim. iv. 5. § 1 Cor. xii. 28. Eph. iv. 11. ¶ 1 Tim. ii. 5. † Catechismus ad Parochos, pars 3. ad primum præceptum, de Invocatione Sanctorum, §. 24. multaque eorum merito et gratia in nos Deus confert beneficia. ‡ 2 Tim. i. 18.

was then dead, from St. Paul's mentioning^b his house, or household only, himself possibly being then absent, and not returned from Rome to Ephesus. But, secondly, supposing him to be then dead, St. Paul's prayer was not for deliverance from torment in the state between death and the resurrection, (which is the supposed torment of the popish purgatory,) but for mercy *in that day*, the same day he had before mentioned^c, *viz.* the great day of judgment. But mercy in purgatory, if it do them any good, must be (according to their own doctrine) before that day.

5thly, That a wilful sinner vainly encourages himself from St. Paul's acknowledging^d that he was the *chief* of sinners; that being spoken not in relation to what he was then, but what he had been before his conversion to Christianity, when^e he was a *blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious*, in opposition to the holy religion of Jesus. That was his chief sin, not an habitual practice of any vice. As to such he declared on the contrary^f, *Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man.*

6thly, That blessing the table, or saying grace, that is, the craving a blessing from God on our food, and thanksgiving afterwards, is a necessary and Christian practice, encouraged by St. Paul; who hath taught us^g, that *every creature of God is good, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God*, (which hath allowed it for food^h;) *and prayer*. From the commandⁱ, *When thou hast eaten, and art full, thou shalt bless the Lord thy God*, the Jews always say grace^k; as our Saviour did^l, *he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven he blessed, &c.* So did also the ancient Christians^m; nay, even the very heathens had such a custom; and the contrary practice of too many, of devouring the creatures which the good God hath

^b Verse 16. and chap. iv. 19. ^c Verse 12. ^d Chap. i. 15. ^e As
verse 13. going before. ^f Acts xxiv. 16. ^g 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5. ^h Gen. ix. 3.
ⁱ Deut. viii. 10. ^k P. Fagius in loc. Buxtorf. Synagog. Judæorum, c. 12.
Leo Modena, pars ii. c. 10. ^l Matt. xiv. 9. ^m Non prius discumbitur quam
oratio ad Deum prægustetur. Tertul. Apolog. c. 39.

made and preserved for our use, and by whose blessing it is that we are nourished and refreshed by them, without either looking up to heaven for a blessing, or returning thanks for them, is most indecent, unchristian, and atheistical.

Design of the Epistle to Philemon.

THIS Philemon is said to be a considerable personⁿ at Coloss: he had been converted by St. Paul, as is probable from ver. 19. The occasion of this Epistle was thus; Philemon had a servant named Onesimus, who ran away from him, and in his ramble was got as far as to Rome; there St. Paul, being a prisoner, met with him, and converted him to the faith; which is the meaning of that in ver. 10. *whom I have begotten in my bonds.* St. Paul writes this Epistle, and sends Onesimus with it to his master Philemon: in it he rejoiceth in Philemon's persisting in the faith of Christ, and shewing so good an effect of it, by his charitable refreshing the poor Christians; but the chief design was to request Philemon to entertain once more his old servant Onesimus, and to forgive him the former injury, as one that now, being a Christian, would be the more faithful and diligent.

Observations on the Epistle to Philemon.

1st, THAT the embracing an opportunity of doing a good turn to another, (how mean soever he may be,) as to soul or body, is a most Christian apostolical practice. How careful was St. Paul, first to convert this vagabond servant, and then to restore him to his master's favour.

2dly, That it is the duty of a master to forgive and be reconciled to an injurious and negligent servant, on his repentance, submission, and reformation.

Design of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

THE author of this Epistle was St. Paul, as the most ancient fathers declare^o. He doth not indeed begin with his name,

ⁿ Hammond on the Title. ^o Du Pin of the Canon on this Epistle. Dr. Mill's Prolegom. p. 10, &c. and p. 26.

as in other Epistles, *Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ*, (as it is supposed,) for this reason, because he was made an apostle not so much of the circumcision, that is, of the Jews, (to whom this Epistle was sent,) as of the Gentiles, who were most properly his charge^r. Again^s, we read that the author had Timothy for his companion, and wrote from Italy, and entreated the Hebrews to pray for him, that he might *be restored* to them *the sooner*; all which most agrees with St. Paul's circumstances, and manner of writing^t.

Lastly, in the forementioned chap. xiii. of this Epistle, he calls Timothy *our brother Timothy*, as it was customary with St. Paul to call him, when he wrote to others^u.

By the Hebrews, are probably meant in this place those of the Jewish people who had received the faith, and lived in or near their own country Judea. Many of these were in danger of falling away upon a twofold account; either, first, being staggered by the arguments of the unbelieving Jews, who were zealous for the law of Moses, and maintained the excellency and necessity of the old legal institutions and sacrifices, which were at first appointed by God, who had wrought so many miracles among them, and sent so many prophets to direct and encourage the observation of those very ordinances, and that for so many ages past: or, secondly, because, whatever Jews were converted to Christianity, they were most bitterly persecuted, through the assistance or connivance of the Roman power, by their unbelieving brethren and countrymen^x; insomuch, that some had already forsaken the Christian public assemblies^y. Now this being the case, the Apostle labours to keep them steady in their Christian profession; to which purpose^z, he sets forth the excellency of Christ, as to his nature, he being the Son of God, and far above angels, according to the prophecy in the book of Psalms concerning him; that the account which his apostles gave of him was sufficiently confirmed by *signs and wonders, and divers mira-*

^r Acts xxii. 21. Rom. xi. 13. ^s In chap. xiii. of this Epistle, verse 18. to the end.

^t For which see Philemon, verse 1. Rom. xv. 30, 31. 2 Thess. iii. 1.

^u 2 Cor. i. 1. Col. i. 1. ^x 1 Thess. ii. 14, 15. ^y Heb. x. 25. ^z In chap. i. ii. iii. and iv. to verse 14.

cles wrought by them in confirmation of their doctrine: that he took on him the nature of man in *the seed of Abraham*, that so by suffering death himself, he might (through the value of his precious blood) both make void the design of the devil, (to keep men under the power of eternal death,) and also by sufferings *be made like* unto us, and be thereby the more inclined, and the better qualified to compassionate and succour us: that he was more excellent than Moses, who indeed *was faithful*, yet was but like *a servant* in another house: and though Joshua gave the Israelites rest in Canaan, yet *the rest* which Christ gives in heaven is far more excellent; which we should therefore *labour to enter into*.

Further^b, the Apostle shews the excellency of Christ's priesthood, particularly, that in him two famous prophecies in the book of Psalms are fulfilled; such as, first, ^c *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*, (by raising him from the dead, in order to be an heavenly Priest and King^d.) The second prophecy is Psal. cx. 4. (wherein is a confirmation by an oath,) *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedeck*. Aaron's priesthood had its beginning in Moses's law, and the priests after his order died, and wanted others to succeed them; but our Lord is the only *priest after the order of Melchisedeck*; that is, a priest who had no ordination from man, and also who never shall die, or want a successor, but continues for ever, (as there is no account given of Melchisedeck's father, descent, or posterity, nor of any beginning or end, or succession in his office, as is of the priests under the Law.) And farther, as Melchisedeck was a king and priest too. (as was usual in the first ages of the world,) so Christ, a king as well as a priest, hath full power for ever to bless all his church; and since God dealt with their father Abraham, not only by promise, but *an oath*^e, in like manner we have an assurance by both those immutable things (a promise and an oath) of Christ's eternal priesthood; not *after the order of Aaron*, and of *the tribe of Levi*, but *after the order of Melchisedeck*. Now,

^b In chap. iv. 14. and chap. v. &c. to the ninth Acts xii. 33.

^c Gen. xxii. 16. 17.

^e Psal. ii. 7.

^d As

if perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, as it was in the Law, what further need was there, that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedeck, as it must be by virtue of the ancient prophecy: and this change of the priesthood, from Aaron to Melchisedeck, argues a change also of the Law. And, which is further to be considered, priests indeed received tithes of their brethren; but so great a priest was Melchisedeck, the type of Christ, that even the patriarch Abraham (and so Levi, as being in his loins) paid him tithes, and received a blessing from him; and sure the less is blessed of the greater. Again, the Apostle argues, that Christ, our High-Priest, had no sin of his own, like the Levitical priests, to offer up sacrifice for; but is the holy and undefiled Son of God, who, having made one sufficient offering for sins, is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; and not only so, but Christ is a Mediator of a better covenant than Moses could be under the Law, (as Jeremiah foretold ^g;) not on the performance of an outward ceremonial, but an inward true righteousness, which by his grace he would work in their hearts.

Then as for *sacrifices*^h, that sacrifice of himself, which Christ offered on the cross, was more effectual by far than all the oblations and sacrifices appointed by the law of Moses. Aaron indeed once a year entered into the holy of holies, in the tabernacle on earth; but that was only a shadow of heaven, into which Christ, our High-Priest, is entered, to make intercession for us: so also the gifts and sacrifices under the Law were as types or figures, and *shadows*, to signify Christ the great and true sacrifice; and those legal typical sacrifices of the blood of bulls and goats, &c. cleansed them indeed from legal pollutions, (that is, the defilements by their eating unclean meats, or neglecting such and such washings, &c.) but could not of themselves make atonement for, or *take away*, the guilt of *sins*, so as that no farther sacrifice should be needful: that was done by the precious blood of Christ, the eternal Son of God; and therefore they ought to keep

^g Chap. xxxi. 31, &c.

^h Chap. ix. x.

stedfast to their Christian profession, otherwise the danger would be great, even to their utter destruction.

This so dangerous effect of apostacy the Apostle twice mentions; first¹, where he tells them, it would be *impossible to renew them again to repentance*, if, after having been *enlightened*^k with the knowledge of Christ, and baptized, and (as a consequence thereof) endued with the divine Spirit, and made *partakers* of the miraculous gifts of the *Holy Ghost*, they should now designedly, and out of a perverse hatred of Christ and the Gospel, cast off their holy religion, and so become apostates from Christianity, and fall back to Judaism; whereby they would resist all the evidence that God designed, or could be offered for their conviction; and *crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame*, (their casting off the Christian religion being as a confessing that Christ was justly crucified.) The like dangerous effect of apostacy the Apostle repeats^l, assuring them, *There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment*, for all such who should disown or slight the *blood* of Christ, and the *Holy Spirit of God*; there being no other principles of any true religion that can be serviceable to their salvation, no other means than those which they have forsaken, no other sacrifice for expiating sin, no second baptism, nor any other Holy Spirit or grace renewing their minds: and therefore, he exhorts them to perseverance, notwithstanding any difficulties or sufferings^m; which as they did not hinder them at the first from becoming Christians, though *they endured a great fight of afflictions*, so now should not, from persevering as such; that they might receive the promise: forasmuch as God would *not tarry*, but would both shortly deliver them, and eternally reward them: in the mean time, that they *live by faith*, until they should actually possess the promise, to the *saving of the soul*. What has been

¹ In chap. vi. 4, 5, 6. ^k *Φωτισθεντας* (enlightened) signifies those who, having been instructed in the knowledge of Christ, and then baptized, were further enlightened by the divine Spirit. Just. Martyr. Apol. I. edit. Grabe, §. 80. c. Annotat. Kortholt. in loc. ^l Chap. x. 26, &c. ^m Chap. x. 32, &c. to chap. xi.

hitherto mentioned is the substance of the Epistle, from the beginning to the eleventh chapter.

And to the intent they might so *live by faith*, and at length *save their souls*, he goes onⁿ to set before them the power of the grace of faith, and proposes the example of the saints in former times. This *faith*, he tells them, *is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen*^o; that is, a confident dependence upon God for the performance of his promise, though for the present we do not see it. Thus the servants of God were renowned of old; of which he gives so many instances throughout the eleventh chapter; and then tells them^p, that all these examples of faith and constancy ought to be encouragements to them, to *run on with patience* in their Christian *race*; especially seeing Christ himself, *the Author and Finisher of our faith*, or the Leader and Crowner thereof, by *resisting unto blood*, or suffering death, (which yet they had not done,) by his own sufferings sanctified afflictions in this life, in order to a glorious reward in heaven. Nay, even for the present, those very persecutions and afflictions, at worst, are the badges and tokens of God's fatherly love to us, rather *chastening us as his children*, than that we should lose his eternal bliss.

Afterwards^q he instructs them to adorn their Christian profession by what is very becoming it, namely, peace and holiness; being free from hatred and variance, and impure lusts of the flesh; and (which was all along the main design) to take heed that no one amongst them be so profane a person, who, like *Esau that sold his birthright*, should despise and cast off their glorious privileges in Christ Jesus, and their interest in the Gospel, and in being members of Christ's holy church, with the benefits of the new covenant through Christ's blood: which he expresses after the Jewish manner, by the figurative terms of *mount Zion*, and the *heavenly Jerusalem*, with the dignity of being members of *the general assembly*, (not consisting of one nation only, as that of the Israelites on mount Sinai, but of all, both Jews and Gentiles,)

ⁿ Chap. xi. ^o Verse 1. ^p Chap. xii. 1—14. ^q Chap. xii. 14, &c.
to the end of that chapter.

with an *innumerable company of angels, and the church of the first-born*, (of apostles and others, who first received the Gospel,) whose names *are written, or enrolled, in heaven, &c.* These privileges were infinitely more valuable than the Law given in mount Sinai, in such a frightful and terrifying manner, with burnings, and thunderings, and lightnings; nor could that dispensation under the Law continue without *removing*; but the happiness under the Gospel *cannot be moved*, but shall always *remain*.

Lastly^r, he gives them sundry particular directions for a Christian life and behaviour, and then again encourages them to persevere in the faith, and to obey the governors of the church, who *had the rule over them*; and also cautions them against being seduced by their former leaders, who, whilst they adhere to the Levitical sacrifices, have no right to partake of the sacrifice of Christ's death, nor of the Lord's table, the Christian altar, where that is set forth; no more than they could eat of the bodies or flesh of the sin-offering under the Law, which was *burnt without the camp*^s, and was a type or representation of our sin-offering, which Jesus made *with his own blood*, when he also (according to that representation of him) *suffered without the gate*. *Unto him therefore we are to go*, not relying upon the Mosaical law, but the cross of Christ. Afterwards the Apostle, requesting their prayers for him, and beseeching God to keep them in his service and favour, concludes this excellent Epistle.

Observations on the Epistle to the Hebrews.

1st, It is here plainly and distinctly declared, that the Levitical ordinances in Moses's law were shadows of Christ the substance; and therefore that those Mosaical ordinances are abolished (or rather cease of themselves) since Christ's appearing in the world^t.

2dly, That the design of Christ's death was not only to testify to the truth of his doctrine, or to give us an example

^r Chap. xiii. 1, &c.
also chap. xiii. 9-14.

^s Exod. xxix. 14.

^t See the first ten chapters, and

of patience, or in order to his resurrection, that he might obtain power to redeem and sanctify us, or to confirm our faith and hopes of pardon, (as some have pretended;) but chiefly to *make^b a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for our sins*. For in this Epistle the Apostle shews, that the death of Christ was shadowed by the expiatory sacrifices under the Law; from which the Jews expected this benefit, *viz.* that the beast slain and sacrificed would be accepted in their stead, to excuse them from punishment^c. Now the Apostle here shews, that the death of Christ is truly all that which they expected their legal sacrifices to be, that is, such as did *bear the iniquity*, the faults and punishments of the sinner, and *make an atonement* for them^d. So *Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and hath put away sin by the sacrifice of himself^e*.

The style and common phrases that were under the Law, concerning sacrifices for sin, as *propitiation*, an *atonement*, *bearing sins*, a *ransom*, &c. were well known in the New Testament times^f, both among Jews and Gentiles: now the apostles assure us, in the same style and phrases, of the benefit of Christ's death, *viz.* that he died in our stead, to offer himself truly a sacrifice for sins, when they say that Christ's death was a *propitiation*, (which is a sacrifice to appease God's anger^g;) and an *atonement*, (which signifies a purging from sin^h;) a being *offered to bear sinsⁱ*, and, lastly, a giving himself *a ransom for us^k*. The apostles wrote plainly, and it was of great concern they should, and that age could no otherwise understand them.

3dly, In the Papists' sacrifice of the mass, or sacrament of the Lord's Supper, they pretend to offer up to God the Father the body and blood of his Son Christ, as being sub-

^b Grot. de Satisfactione, c. i. 10. ^c *Obj.* Expiatio in sacrificiis, non de ipsa mactatione pecudis, quæ revera fuisset luitio illa, seu pœnæ persolutio; sed de iis dicitur quæ mactationem consequentur, ut de aspersione sanguinis. *Resp.* Pœna pecudi inogabatur, cum pecudi vita adimebatur; sed Deo ritu sacrificali soluta fuit, cum *vita animæ* pecudis Deo, more sacrificali, reddebatur. *Outram de Sacrificiis.* ^d Lev. i. 4. and iv. 26. and x. 17. ^e See the first ten chapters of this Epistle. ^f Grotius *ibid.* ^g 1 John ii. ^h Rom. v. 11. ⁱ Heb. ix. 28.

^k 1 Tim. ii. 6.

stantially present under the appearances of bread and wine, (according to the false doctrine of *transubstantiation*¹, and therefore affirm their said oblation in the mass to be in itself, or in its own virtue, *a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead.* This is directly contrary to the doctrine of St. Paul, who says^m, that Christ offered one sacrifice for sins upon the cross, and that *by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.* That by *perfecting for ever*, St. Paul means the making a propitiation for, and expiating sins, appears from the testimony of the prophet, which he produces to confirm thisⁿ, *their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.* Now if Christ on the cross hath made a perfect and complete atonement, propitiation, and satisfaction for sins, by his one offering of himself, and once for all, as St. Paul says he did, there is no occasion for the repetition of such a sacrifice, as there was for the Jewish sacrifices^o; and therefore the Popish mass, and their sacrifice, which is so great a part of their religious worship, and on which they so much depend for their well-being in this world and in the next, and with the want of which they upbraid the Protestants, hath no foundation in the holy Scriptures, but is contrary to it.

And as for the notion of the ancient Christians^p, though they call the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper a *sacrifice*, yet in their opinion there is not *the thing itself, viz.* a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice of Christ's real body, in the Papists' sense; but a *commemoration*^q, or representing thereof, by *shewing forth the Lord's death*^r, as it were, *setting before the Father* the sacrifice of his Son's death for the sins of the world, and *pleading the merit thereof* for pardon and acceptance, to the great comfort of the faithful. In this sense they esteemed, that, in the Sacrament, Christ is *mystically*, as he is said to be, *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*^s, and that was not verily and indeed, but in a mystery: so the

¹ For which see the 7th and 8th observations on 1 Cor. ^m Chap. x. 10, 12, 14. ⁿ Chap. x. 16, 17. ^o Verse 11. ^p Forbesius Hist. Theol. l. xi. c. xx. §. 21, 29. Mede's Christian Sacrifice, and his Discourse of the Name *Altar*.
^q As Luke xxii. 19. ^r As 1 Cor. xi. 26. ^s Rev. xiii. 8.

Eucharist is a *commemorative*, or *representative sacrifice*, because it is a commemorating, or representing of the only true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice in the creatures of bread and wine, with prayers and praises, according to Christ's institution, in order to partake of mercy and pardon through the same: for which cause they reckoned that their prayers, for themselves or others, were then more effectual. In which sense the ancient Christians, even from the purest antiquity, understand this prophecy[†], *In every place incense shall be offered in my name, and a pure offering*; and also that part of Christ's sermon[‡], *If thou bring thy gift to the altar, &c.* and that of the Apostle[§], *We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle*[¶]. In a word, this whole matter is thus explained by two of the most eminent fathers of the church; the one is St. Chrysostom on these words[‡], *Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*. "What then (says he) do we offer every day? He answers, We offer indeed, but it is by making a commemoration of his death; and this sacrifice is one, and not many, because it was once offered; not as that which was carried into the holy of holies; that was a figure of this. We offer not another, not a different sacrifice, as the Jewish high-priest did of old, but still one and the same, or rather we perform the remembrance of a sacrifice." The other ancient father is St. Austin[¶]: "The flesh and blood (says he) of this sacrifice, before Christ's coming, was promised by the sacrifice of resemblance; in his passion, it was really and truly given: after his ascension, it is celebrated (*per sacramentum memorie*) by a sacrament of commemoration." This being a matter of great importance, hath been thus laid plain before the English reader.

4thly, That the *wilful sin* threatened[‡], after which, *it is impossible to renew them again to repentance*, because for such *there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of indignation, &c.* is not every lapsing in time of

† Mal. i. 11. ‡ Matt. v. 23, 24. § Heb. xiii. 10. ¶ For all which, see the authors last cited. † Heb. ix. 26. ‡ Contra Faustum Manichæum, l. xx. c. 21. † Chap. vi. 4, &c. and x. 26, &c.

persecution, nor the profaning of the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, nor yet the falling into great sins through temptation; all which may be timely and truly repented of and pardoned; but an utter renouncing Christ's religion, a casting him off, and maliciously reproaching Christ, and relapsing into Judaism or Heathenism: for the Apostle is warning the converted Jews from falling off again to their former Jewish religion; and those who should thus become apostates, he says, *fall away*, and, as it were, *crucify the Son of God afresh*; nay, *have trodden under foot the Son of God*; and there is no other besides who can relieve them: so that this dreadful passage ought not to drive other sinners into despair, who do not finally fall away from the Christian faith and hope, but repent and reform. This is evident from the place itself, because it is not declared to be impossible to renew or recover such, because God would not accept their repentance; but because the persons here described by the Apostle are supposed not to be renewed to repentance.

5thly, That no one can have such grounds of comfort in trouble as a good Christian; for his troubles and sufferings make him so much the more like unto God's servants, as being the afflictions of the people of God; and even to Jesus Christ himself, who will reward all his followers, and crown their faith and patience with eternal joy and glory: and in the mean time, such a servant of Christ can comfort himself, that God is his Father, and will deal with him accordingly, and order all for his everlasting good^c.

Thus much for the Epistles of St. Paul.

Design of the General Epistle of St. James.

THIS James, as the ancients affirm^d, was one of the twelve apostles, and was called *the brother of our Lord*^e, either because he was (as many of the^f ancients write) the son of Joseph by a former wife, or because nearly related to the Virgin Mary; for the Jews called relations *brethren*. He is

^c Chap. xi. and xii. ^d Cave of St. James the Less. ^e Matt. xiii. 55. Gal. i. 19. ^f Cave, *ibid.* and Bishop Pearson on the Creed, artic. 3.

also called James the Less, to distinguish him from the other James, whom Herod beheaded. After our Lord's ascension into heaven, he was bishop of Jerusalem^a. This holy man was not content to take care of the Christians only in and about Jerusalem, but also sent this Epistle *to the twelve tribes scattered abroad*, or that were dispersed into other parts: and therefore it is called a General Epistle, the copies thereof being handed up and down in several places. Some of the admonitions in this Epistle seem intended for all the dispersed Israelites, or the twelve tribes in general; but the most for those of them who were converted Christians, and who lived intermixed with their brethren who were not converted. There were also doubtless among the Christian converts some Judaizers, like those^b who were *zealous for the law*, of which mention hath been often made before.

Because the true Christians were constantly liable to sundry troubles and persecutions, especially from their old enemies the unbelieving Jews; the Apostle, in the beginning of this Epistle, exhorts them to patience under all their troubles; as being *trials* of the sincerity of their faith, and what would be recompensed with a *crown of life*. Again, the Christian religion was in danger to be abused by the loose doctrines and practices of some pretended Christians and heretics, in particular the followers^c of Simon Magus, (spoken of before on the Acts,) who wresting St. Paul's doctrine of justification by faith only, (that is, without the pretence of merit, or the works of the ceremonial law,) pretended that they might do what they list, and encouraged men to depend on a naked belief of Christ's religion, as if faith would save them without holiness and good works.

Against these the Apostle cautions the true Christians, and presses the renouncing of all impiety and filthy lusts; and also warns them against a dependence on a partial observance only of God's laws, against despising the poor, strife and envying, covetous desires, bitter words, pride, a dependence

^a Euseb. Hist. l. ii, c. 1. Cave, *ibid.* ^b Acts xxi. 20. ^c Irenæus, l. i. c. 20. Dr. Mill's Prolegom. p. 7. See also the fifth and sixth general remarks on the Epistles.

on and confidence in this world, forgetting the uncertainty of this life, and a hearing the word without doing it; and on the other hand, exhorts to the practice of Christian virtues, such as kindness, mutual love, peaceableness, humility, &c. And, in general, proves that a bare faith without charity, and such other good works as the Gospel requires, is *dead* and worth nothing. He instances in Abraham their forefather, who was justified not only by his *faith* in believing God's promise, but also by his *works*, which proceeded from that faith, when he obeyed God in offering his son Isaac; so also Rahab was justified, not only by her faith in believing that the Lord had given the Israelites the land of Canaan, but by her works in preserving the messengers who were sent to spy it outⁱ. *The wars and fightings*^k seem more especially to note the factions, mutinies, and uproars among the Jews of that age in general; who, pretending to be a free people, could not easily bear subjection under the Romans, or any others: such mutinings occasioned many massacres among them, as Josephus shews^l; and most likely some, who called themselves Christians, were carried away with the common prejudices of that people in general, and might too much countenance the tumults so frequent among the whole body of the Jews.

In the beginning of the fifth chapter, the Apostle seems to tax the unbelieving Jews, for their covetous hoarding, oppressions, and persecution of the Christians; and to threaten them with Christ's speedy coming to execute judgment on them, when they should be miserably slaughtered, and spoiled of all their treasures, as it came to pass not long afterwards; and thence he encouraged the true Christians to be patient, and to wait for deliverance; and by the way, charged them to avoid an evil custom got among the Jews, of swearing by heaven and earth, &c. in their ordinary communications.

Lastly^m, he instructs them what to do in the midst of the

ⁱ Josh. ii. For reconciling this with St. Paul's justification by faith only, in his Epistle to the Romans and Galatians, see the first, fifth, and sixth general remarks on the Epistles.

^k Chap. iv. 1.

^l Wars, book ii. ch. 19, 20.

^m Chap. v. 13. to the end.

various accidents of this life; if they are *afflicted*, to pray; if *merry* or prosperous, to praise God; if *sick*, to send for *the elders*, the bishops or presbyters, *of the church*, that they might have the benefit both of their *prayers*, for the forgiveness of their sins, and also of the *anointing with oil in the name of the Lord Jesus*, which, being added to the prayer, would, by an extraordinary gift in those primitive times, miraculously heal diseasesⁿ. Sick persons were also to *confess their faults one to another*, or acknowledge their sins, which might occasion their sickness, in order to procure prayers, that such sins might *be forgiven them*, and they might be healed. It is not here expressly mentioned^o, whether this *confession of faults one to another*^p, is to be understood to be made to the *elders of the church*, whom they were to send for^q, the words *one to another* being sometimes limited according to the preceding matter; as^r, *submitting one to another*, is meant of inferiors to superiors, as in the following instance of wives to their husbands^s: and^t, *use hospitality one to another*, can be meant only of the rich to their equals and the poor; or, whether the sick was to confess his sins to any Christian brethren, who should visit him in the presence of the elder, to procure their prayers for the pardon of such sins, and the restoring him to health; the constant practice of the ancients, and the connection of this passage^u with the foregoing^x inclines us to understand^y the confession to be made to *the elders of the church*, who were to be sent for, and to *pray over* the sick^z, not in the Romanist's sense, either in respect to their sacrament of penance, or extreme unction; but that the visiting pastor, as a spiritual physician, might be informed of the state of his sick penitent, and accordingly know how to apply to him, pray for him, and comfort him by ministerial absolution; in which sense the words have been thus paraphrased, *Confess your faults one to another*,

ⁿ Mark vi. 13. ^o See Dr. Hammond on the place, and Dr. Comber on the Office for the Visitation of the Sick, §. 2. rubr. 5. ^p Ver. 16. ^q Ver. 14.
^r Eph. v. 21. ^s Ver. 22. ^t 1 Pet. iv. 9. ^u Ver. 16. ^x Ver. 14, 15.
^y Dr. Wells. ^z Ver. 14.

that is, the sick to the ministers of the church; and *pray one for another*, that is, the minister for the sick ^a.

The Apostle concludes with encouragement to all those who (on such occasion of sickness, or any other) shall be instrumental to the conversion of a sinner.

Observations on the Epistle of St. James.

1st, THAT this Apostle fully and evidently declares the will of God to be this: That all who believe in Christ, live holy lives, and carefully perform good works; otherwise their faith and profession are utterly vain ^b.

2dly, That since our lives are so uncertain, it is a very unaccountable thing to be always hoarding up for this world ^c.

3dly, That oppressing the poor, and unjust exaction, is an *heaping up* to ourselves an heavier damnation ^d.

4thly, That the Papists' *extreme unction*, wherewith they anoint dying persons, in order to the salvation of their souls, hath no foundation in the primitive practice of *anointing the sick with oil*^e; for this was in order to the *saving the sick* from death, and *raising him up*, and the having those *sins forgiven*, which had provoked God to inflict a bodily disease upon him; and so for the recovery, and miraculous *healing* of the sick person; which gift hath long since ceased: whereas the Romish church appoint anointing, when they suppose the sick past recovery, in order to his salvation in the next world, without appointment or promise in the holy Scriptures.

Design of the Two Epistles General of St. Peter.

THE first Epistle was written by St. Peter, one of the twelve Apostles, to the Christians dispersed up and down in several countries of the Lesser Asia^f; for which cause, this Epistle also, and the next, are called *general*, like that of St. James. The Christian *strangers* herein mentioned, no

^a Dt. Wells.

^b Chap. ii.

^c Chap. iv. 13, 14.

^d Chap. v. 1—6.

^e Mentioned chap. v. 14, 15.

^f Chap. i. 1, 2.

doubt, were most of them converted Jews; for there were many scattered or dispersed Jews in several countries; but that there were converted Gentiles or *proselytes* among them, as in the other churches at Rome, Corinth, &c. seems probable, from their being *in times past not a people*^g, and from their having *wrought the will of the Gentiles* formerly, *by lasciviousness and abominable idolatries*^h: for of all sins, the whole body of the Jews were careful to avoid idolatryⁱ, ever since their return from the Babylonish captivity.

The Apostle, in the first place, endeavours to prevent their apostacy from the Christian religion; which they were in danger of, by reason of their persecutions, and *fiery trials*: he therefore confirms them in the faith, which will one day give them *an inheritance incorruptible* in heaven; and comforts them under their present sufferings and persecutions, which were for *the trial of their faith*, and which ought to be a matter of rejoicing to them, because, tending to secure their *praise, and honour, and glory*, at the appearing of Jesus Christ; and the more to comfort and confirm them, he shews that the Christian doctrine is no new thing, but that the prophets foretold this *salvation* by Christ, his *sufferings* and *glory*; and that they lose no privilege by believing in Christ, but rather obtain greater; which he expresses in the Jewish phrases^k, of being *a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people*. These, he says, were now the Christian privileges, however the unbelieving Jews claimed them for themselves.

The Apostle also directs them in an holy conversation; that to this purpose they carefully abstain from all sin and lusts, that might be a scandal among the Heathen, and discharge the several duties which Christianity requires; such as love and kindness, constancy in prayer, charity, and hospitality, humility, trust in God, and watchfulness against their adversary the Devil's temptations; and also in respect to their particular relations, whether as subjects, servants, husbands, wives,

^g Chap. ii. 10. ^h Chap. iv. 3. ⁱ Dr. Wells thinks they were only Jews, because by them the Scripture understands the dispersed; and that idolatry may signify the covetousness of the Jews in getting money; as St. Paul says, covetousness is idolatry. ^k Chap. ii. 9. like that of Exod. xix. 6.

bishops and presbyters of the church called elders, and those committed to their charge; that all be careful to behave themselves as the Christian doctrine requires. The particular reason of the exhortation to submission to *governors, &c.* at that time^a, might be to preserve them from being concerned in the Jewish wars, or bearing any part in that rebellion against Cæsar, or the Roman emperor and his officers, which was then breaking out among the Jews.

That difficult passage^b, *by which* (Spirit) *also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which some time were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, &c.* is thus explained; *viz.* that Christ by his Spirit preached to those before the flood, by the ministry of Noah; they may be said to be *in prison*, either because in bondage or captivity under sin^c, or because, for their disobedience to the Spirit of Christ, waiting and preaching to them by Noah, they were all drowned, and their spirits are *reserved*, (as it were in prison,) expecting *the judgment* of the great day^d.

The Apostle mentions one particular motive to perseverance in the Christian religion, and a pious conversation^e, *the end of all things is at hand*; that is, the Jewish state was then near to its end, and their destruction approaching, according to our Saviour's phrase concerning the same destruction of the Jews^f, that *the end was not yet* in his time; but it being near at hand when St. Peter wrote this Epistle, they being for the most part converted Jews, should make a proper use of it, by piety and prayer, to secure themselves from being then overwhelmed.

As to the Second Epistle General of St. Peter, it was written a little before St. Peter's martyrdom. § Herein he confirms the Christians, as in the former Epistle, and exhorts them to continue stedfast in the Christian faith, and to evidence the truth of their perseverance therein, not only by a naked faith, but an holy conversation; not *turning from the holy commandment*. He assures them he was a witness to Christ's glory in the mount, and heard the voice declaring

^a Chap. ii. 13. ^b Chap. iii. 19, 20. ^c As Isa. xlii. 6, 7, and xlix. 9.
Acts viii. 23. *in the bond of iniquity.* ^d 2 Pet. ii. 5, 9. ^e Chap. iv. 7. ^f Matt.
xxiv. 6. § Chap. i. 14.

him to be the Son of God. The Apostle also warns them ^h against heretics and false teachers, who were as vicious in their lives, as deceiving in their doctrine, giving themselves liberty in all manner of vice and uncleanness, *despising government*, and by their *cunningly devised fables*, endeavouring to poison others with their damnable heresies and impieties; like Balaam, who taught Balak how to ensnare the Israelites in the commission of fornication and idolatry. As for those who derided the Christian's hope, because things for the present *continued as they were*, the Apostle shews ⁱ, that Christ's patience was out of kindness to reform them: but as the old world was surprised in their sins, and destroyed by a flood of water; so as certainly Christ would come to judgment, when the world should be destroyed by fire, and the ungodly perish; therefore he exhorts to holiness and stedfastness in the faith.

There are two passages in this Epistle, which have been differently interpreted; the first ^k, of God's *casting the angels which sinned* (that is, the devils) *down to hell, &c.* Not that they were to be in hell torments before the day of judgment, for they are represented in Scripture to have their mansions in the air, and about the earth; where they tempt and seduce, and do all the mischief they can to mankind: hence their chief, Satan, is styled *the prince of the air* ^l; and the devils cried out to Christ ^m, *Art thou come to torment us before the time?* So that the *casting them down to hell*, as also in Jude ⁿ, *reserving them in everlasting chains*, seems to import only, as the original will bear, and according to the ancients, that God had adjudged them to hellish torments; and so delivered them to be reserved in the air for chains of darkness at the day of judgment: like as ver. 9. *The Lord knoweth how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment*, to be punished; and, ^o *To whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever*; as a condemned criminal is reserved in a dungeon till his execution ^p.

As for the other passage ^q, of the world's being *reserved*

^h Chap. ii. ⁱ Chap. iii. ^k Chap. ii. 4. ^l Eph. ii. 2. ^m Matt. viii. 29. ⁿ Ver. 6. ^o Ver. 17. ^p *Ταφρατος* signifies any place below, or where there is trouble, which the region of the air is, in respect to heaven. Grotius and Dr. Wells in loc. Mede, book i. disc. 4. ^q Chap. iii. 7—13.

unto fire, against the day of judgment, to be burnt up; some understand the Apostle speaking here not of the end of the world, but of the coming of Christ to judgment on the Jews, which was then just approaching; and that in figurative expressions, which the Jews understood in the language of the prophet Joel ^q, by the representation of blood and fire, and the dissolution of the heaven and the earth; thereby denoting an utter destruction, of which this Apostle gave a short hint in the first Epistle ^r, *the end of all things is at hand*; that is, the Jewish temple, their city and state, will shortly be at an end, as it came to pass. But since the Apostle ^s speaks of the destruction of the old world by water, in a literal sense; in like manner he seems to speak of the destruction of the heavens, or elements, and the earth, by fire, in a literal sense too.

Observations on the Two Epistles of St. Peter.

1st, THAT a good Christian may not only be patient, but joyful under sufferings and troubles; which make him so like Christ here, and entitle him to the possession of eternal joy with him hereafter ^t.

2dly, That it is the will of God, that all Christians make conscience of obedience and subjection to the supreme powers, (under whom they live,) and to the magistrates appointed by them; as the first Christians were enjoined to be *subject to the king as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them who are sent by him*; that is, to the emperors, and their deputies the proconsuls, &c. ^u and were taught, not to be of that rebellious, turbulent, and seditious temper, as the Jews were, (under pretence of being a free people, and subject only to God,) *using their liberty for a cloak of maliciousness*. This doctrine of the Apostle is the same with that of his Master; for Christ taught his disciples, that his *kingdom was not of this world*; but that he left their temporal or civil matters in the same state he found them, commanding to *render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's*, to be obedient unto their civil governors.

^q Chap. ii. 30.

^r Chap. iv. 7.

^s Chap. iii. 6.

^t 1 Pet. i. 6 - 10.

^u 1 Pet. ii. 13, &c.

3dly, That when God delays the punishing of sin at present, it is in order to the sinner's conversion; and if that be not the effect, the judgment will prove the more severe ^u.

Design of the Three Epistles General of St. John.

THIS John was one of the twelve Apostles, and the author of the Gospel of St. John ^x. His first Epistle was designed to instruct, comfort, and encourage the primitive Christians, and more particularly the Jewish converts; that their *joy might be full*, in relying on the Son of God; for he is *faithful and just*, to make good his word and promise to forgive us, forasmuch as he is *the propitiation for our sins*, if we believe in him, and for the future *keep his commandments*.

The Christians of that age were in danger of being seduced by some deceivers, the spawn of Simon Magus: he himself, and some of his party, *denied that ^y Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah*, or Christ ^z. Some of the heretics denied the human nature ^a of Christ, or *that Christ was come in the flesh* ^b. They pretended that Christ did seem to be a man, and to die; but was not so in reality, but in appearance only ^c. Another sort of heretical deceivers were contrary to the former, who denied the divine nature of Christ, pretending that he was only bare man ^d, not the Son of God, and *believed not the record that God gave of his Son, who is the true God* ^e, and *eternal life*, (or the Author of eternal life, as he is here described to be ^f.) Against such St. John wrote some part of his Gospel; and now in this Epistle assures the true Christians, that he was one of those who had *heard and seen the Lord Jesus, the Word of life*, (by whom is revealed to us the Gospel of life and salvation,) and conversed with him, being a witness both of his real manhood, and of the

^u 2 Pet. iii. 8, 9, 10. ^x Dr. Mill's Prolegom. p. 17. ^y Iren. l. i. c. 20. Docuit semetipsum esse, qui inter Judæos quidem quasi filius apparebat. ^z Chap. ii. 22. ^a Cerinthus, Marcion, &c. de his Ignatius ad Smyrn. §. 1, 2, 3. et ad Trall. §. 9, 10. Iren. l. i. c. 25. Tertul. de Carne Christi, §. 1. ^b Chap. iv. 2, 3. ^c Iren. l. i. c. 20. Homo appareret esse, cum non esset Homo: which Simon applies to himself, as being the Son, and Christ. ^d Ebion, &c. Iren. l. i. c. 26. and not. Grabii. ^e See Glassius Philol. Sacr. l. iii. tract. 2. de Pron. Relat. Can. 10, and Dr. Whitby in loc. ^f Chap. v. 5, 10, 11, 12, 20.

miraculous power whereby he was evidenced to be *the Son of God*, and *the true God*; and that the deceivers before mentioned, and all their followers, were antichrists, (opposers of Christ.) St. John earnestly warns the Christians to beware of all such; and tells them, that the unction, or anointing which they had received, *i. e.* the miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost upon them, was sufficient to convince them of, and teach them, the truth.

Again, Some of these deceivers, the followers of Simon Magus, pretended, that a bare faith would save without holiness ^g, and allowed themselves in many foul sins; therefore the Apostle cautions the church against them; for every one who rightly hopes in Christ, *purifieth himself*; and *whosoever is born of God*, or formed into a new nature, and endued with his Spirit, *doth not commit sin*, that is, doth not go on in any way of sin; *for his seed*, the Holy Spirit, *remaineth in him*; and, in a manner, *he cannot commit sin, because he is born of God* ^h, being become a *new creature*, and thereby having, as it were, a new nature; his mind, and temper, and inclinations being quite changed from what they were; so that to commit wilful sin is now contrary to the genius and temper of his soul, to his inclination and disposition, (as we say of a generous man, that he cannot do a base action;) and it is become the bent of his very nature to please God, and to be careful not to offend him by sin: but *he that committeth sin*, that lives in the practice of any wilful sin, *is of the devil* ⁱ. So that all true Christians are to be careful that *no man deceive* them in this matter, but that they abandon and avoid all evil courses; and also shew their love to the Lord Jesus, (who so much loved us,) by keeping his commandments; especially maintaining true cordial *love one towards another*, which is the peculiar duty of a Christian ^k, on the performance of which St. John much insists; forasmuch as, except those instances of piety, which directly have respect to God, or belong only

^g Simoniani et Valentiniani. Iren. l. i. c. 20. ut liberos agere quæ velint: secundum enim ipsius gratiam salvari homines. non secundum operas justas: et Iren. l. i. c. 1. §. 12. et. Grabii not. ibidem. ^h 1 John iii. 3, 9. ⁱ Ver. 8.

^k Chap. iv. 7, 8, 9.

to ourselves, the rest are in a manner included in love to our neighbour; which so influences our behaviour, that it be consistent with justice, charity, and all the duties we are to perform to parents, superiors, equals, and inferiors.

Lastly, He concludes as he began, with confirming them in the faith of the Son of God, who hath the gift of eternal life, and will hear and grant their supplications.

In this Epistle, St. John gives an illustrious proof of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity: *'There are three that bear record (or witness) in heaven; the Father, the Word, (or Son,) and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.* Which words are omitted in some ancient copies, probably because in the original the same words, which we translate *there are three that bear record*, or witness, ver. 7, are repeated ver. 8. Some careless transcriber (possibly in the earlier ages of Christianity, after whom others copied) having written, *There are three that bear record*, ver. 7, happened to leave out the remaining part of the 7th verse, and so far of the beginning of the 8th verse, till he came to look upon the same words in the 8th verse, *There are three that bear record*, or witness, (for it is the same word in the original Greek, which is translated *record* in the 7th verse, and *witness* in the 8th verse.) The two verses are thus: Ver. 7. *For there are three that bear record [in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.* Ver. 8. *And there are three that bear record] in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one.* Where we see, how easily the transcriber (whose livelihood was gotten by transcribing books, before the invention of printing, and therefore who may well be presumed to write fast) might omit all those words of the 7th verse, and part of the 8th verse, which are between the crotchets, by looking on the same words of the 8th verse, which he had just before written down out of the 7th verse, viz. *There are three that bear record*, and so go on to, *in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood*, ver. 8. instead of, *in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost*, ver. 7. and I the rather mention this conjecture of Dr. Mill, because I

† Chap. v. 7.

observed the like mistake and omission of the transcriber of some of these papers, on the like occasion of some words being repeated near together ¹.

But however this was, it is certain that these words of the 7th verse are quoted in substance by Tertullian ^m, (in whose time the very authentic Epistles of the apostles were extant ⁿ;) and also twice by Cyprian ^o, who are of much greater antiquity than the copies wherein they are omitted, and who lived before Arius, and therefore it cannot be pretended they framed them to serve the Trinitarian cause: but on the other hand it appears from them, that in their time (about the close of the second century, and the beginning of the third) those words were found in St. John's Epistle. And indeed without them the argument of St. John seems very imperfect: for as, ver. 9. *the witness of men* refers to the *witness in earth*, mentioned verse 8. so the *witness of God* refers to the *record* or *witness in heaven*, mentioned verse 7. ^p

What the *sin unto death* is ^q, the remission of which the Apostle doth not say that the first Christians should pray for, he hath not particularly mentioned. In the ancient church, a deliberate commission of the heinous sins of idolatry, murder, and adultery, debarred the sinners from the communion of the church: perhaps the apostle intended the obstinate and incorrigible ^r offenders in such kinds, who, after admonition, still persisted, and refused to submit to the discipline of the church; there being no hopes of cure of that sick soul, who refuses to submit to a proper physician appointed by God: so we call a disease particularly mortal, or *unto death*, when there is no hopes of recovery. Others believe ^s *the sin unto death* to be a total apostasy from the Christian faith, joined with a malicious blaspheming of the Spirit of God, (as the *sin against the Holy Ghost* ^t, which Christ says, *shall not be forgiven*;) for too many of the Jews, at that time, relapsed to

¹ For a farther proof of such a mistake of transcribers, see Casaubon Exercitat. 15. Ann. 33. num. 37. p. 392. ^m Advers. Praxeam, c. 25. ⁿ Præscript. c. 36. ^o De Unitate Ecclesie et Epist. ad Jubaianam. Vide Dr. Mill ad finem Epist. i. Joh. p. 742. ^p Compare Dr. Wells in loc. with Dr. Mill, ibid. ^q Chap. v. 16. ^r Grotius in loc. ^s Beza in loc. ^t In Matt. xii. 31.

Judaism, renouncing Christ, and blaspheming the Holy Spirit, which so miraculously testified of him ; whom St. Paul says *it is impossible to renew again to repentance*^u. So that those are guilty of the sin unto death, who are either obstinate apostates, or continue hardened, incorrigible sinners in other respects.

In the Second Epistle of St. John, he styles himself *the elder*, partly because he was then^v above ninety years of age, and also because he presided over all the churches of the Lesser Asia. This Epistle was written to a Lady of quality, and to her family, who had embraced the Christian faith, and whose *sister*, with her *children*, were known to the apostle^x, much to the same purpose as the former, to testify and confirm them in the true faith, and in the true practice of charity and Christian love, and warning them to beware of the deceivers mentioned in the other Epistle, who *denied that Jesus Christ was come in the flesh*.

The Third Epistle of St. John was written to one Gaius, a Christian, who was a kind friend and courteous entertainer of the distressed *brethren*, or Christians that were strangers, especially those who *went forth* to publish the Gospel among the Gentiles, and would *take nothing of them*^y, and therefore were recommended by the Apostle to wealthy and charitable Christians^z. The Apostle encourages him in the true faith, and to continue that hospitality and charity : and as for Diotrophes, who *loved to have the pre-eminence* himself, and would not submit to the Apostle, nor receive or entertain the brethren recommended to him, nor yet suffer others to do it ; the Apostle threatens to deal with him accordingly, or *remember his deeds*, (not so much for the opposition he made to his person, as to the progress of the Gospel.) But as for Gaius, he had more to say to him, but that he hoped shortly to see him.

Observations on the Epistles of St. John.

1st, THAT it was a signal instance of God's providence and care for the church, to preserve St. John the Apostle alive

^u Heb. vi. 4, &c.

^v Dr. Mill's Prolegom. p. 18.

^x Ver. 13.

^y Ver. 7.

^z Ver. 6.

so long, *viz.* till the emperor Trajan's time ^a, above threescore years after Christ's ascension into heaven. So that he who was one of those who saw the Lord Jesus, and was a witness to all that was done, might give an early check to those deceivers above mentioned, and also might satisfy and confirm the first Christians ^b.

2dly, That those sectaries, who deny the necessity of the ministerial teaching, on pretence that *the anointing* (or the gifts of the Holy Ghost) is sufficient to teach them, because the Apostle told the primitive Christians, *the anointing which ye have received abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you* ^c, is a gross error; for that unction was miraculous, and as such is now ceased; unless they can shew such immediate extraordinary effects of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, in knowledge and speaking languages, and healing diseases, &c. as God vouchsafed to those primitive Christians.

3dly, That unfeigned love, friendship, and kindness one towards another, is the peculiar badge of the Christian religion ^d.

4thly, This Apostle instructs us how we may examine ourselves beforehand, and judge what our sentence is like to be at the last day, (which certainly is a matter of great importance ^e;) *If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God*; that is, if our heart, or conscience, condemn us, (either of wilful omission of duty, or persisting in sin without true repentance and reformation,) then God will condemn us too; for he knows more of us than our consciences know, and if we cannot but condemn ourselves, that is a sign that God will condemn us also; seeing we know by the Scripture rule what are the terms of our acceptance with him, what we ought not to do, and what we ought to have done: but if our conscience condemn us not, but that we have abstained from such and such

^a Martyrolog. Rom. Dec. 27. Euseb. Hist. lib. iii. c. 23. ^b 1 John i. 1, 2, 3.

^c 1 John ii. 27.

^d 1 John ii. 9, 10, 11. and iv. 11. to the end. 2 John 5.

3 John 5, 6. ^e 1 John iii. 20, 21.

sins, and performed such duties, or have timely and truly repented and reformed, and become new creatures, *then have we confidence towards God*; great hopes in God's mercy, that he will not condemn us, but accept our sincere endeavours, hear our prayers, and save our souls.

Design of the General Epistle of St. Jude.

THIS Jude was one of the twelve Apostles, called Lebbæus and Thaddæus^f, and was brother to James, who wrote the Epistle of St. James, and so, as is supposed, one of Joseph's sons by a former^g wife, or else nearly related to the Virgin Mary. This St. Jude wrote this Epistle to some of the first Christians, especially to the Jews who were converted to the Christian faith, and dispersed up and down in several countries; therefore it is also called a catholic or general Epistle, (as were those of his brother James and St. Peter.) The design was to encourage them to persevere in their holy faith, and to caution them against the deceivers and heretics, who had crept in amongst them, on purpose to destroy the true faith, and were persons of corrupt and lewd conversations. The Apostle (much in the same manner as St. Peter had done in his second Epistle) briefly describes their wretched doctrines and practices, and declares the terrible judgments that would overtake them, *who were before of old ordained to this condemnation*^h; that is, not made and ordained by God on purpose to be punished; but, as the originalⁱ strictly imports, of whom it was before written or prophesied, that this should be their condemnation without repentance, as *Enoch prophesied* of them^k.

The history of Michael, and the prophecy of Enoch^l, being owned by the Jews, though not in Scripture, the Apostle argues with them from their own authors and concessions.

Observations on the Epistle of St. Jude.

1st, **THAT** great care is to be taken to avoid deceivers;

^f Matt. x. 3. ^g See what is said of St. James. ^h Ver. 4. ⁱ Προγεγραμμένοι.
^k Ver. 14. ^l Ver. 9, 14.

who many times (whatever they pretend) are very ill persons, and study their own advantage^m.

2dly, That it is a character of the worst of heretics, to *despise dominion*, and *speak evil of dignities*ⁿ.

Design of the Revelation of St. John the Divine.

THIS St. John was one of the twelve apostles, and the ° same that wrote the Gospel, and the three Epistles of St. John. He was called *the Divine*, (as is justly conceived,) by reason of his writings, especially the Gospel, which sets forth the divine nature of Christ, or, as he is God; whereas the other Gospels begin the account of him, as he was man, and born in the world. This book was written by him in the isle of Patmos, whither he was banished^p.

The first three chapters contain the messages which God, in a vision, commanded St. John to send to the seven churches of Asia, represented by *golden candlesticks*, and to the particular bishops of each church, represented by *stars*, and called *angels*, probably in allusion to the Jewish church, the priests whereof were styled *angels*, or *messengers*^q, as bringing the commands of God to the people, and carrying, or offering their prayers to God; or else, from the ruler of the synagogue, whose office was to order the prayers and reading in the synagogue, and was called *angel*, or *bishop*^r.

These seven churches were at Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamus, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea; all which were eminent cities in the Lesser Asia. The design of these messages was, to acquaint them with the notice God took of the behaviour of every one of them, to encourage them in what was good, and reprove them for what was amiss; to caution them against false teachers and seducers, and to comfort them in their sufferings, lest they should, through fear, cast off their holy profession; assuring them that God would not fail

^m Ver. 4, 11, 12, 16. ⁿ Verse 8. ° Just. Martyr, et Irenæus apud Dr. Mill, Prolegom. p. 19. ^p Chap. i. 9. ^q Mal. ii. 7. ^r Lightfoot Hor. in Matt. iv. 23. The Sheliach Zibbor. Compare Prideaux, Connect. part i. book vi. sub an. 445. concerning the ministration of the synagogue service, num. 4.

to reward and crown all those that persevered in his holy faith and service with eternal glory.

^b God is said to *hate the deeds of the Nicolaitanes*, who allowed themselves to commit adultery or fornication, on pretence of encouragement from Nicolaus the deacon; who being suspected of jealousy, to manifest the contrary, is said to give allowance to his wife (not to be an adulteress, but) to marry whom she would ^c, although he himself was freed from any lewd practices.

The other part of the Revelation contains several prophecies concerning the state and condition of the Christian church from the beginning, and the rage of the devil and his instruments against it; concerning the sufferings and martyrdom of many; the ruin and destruction of all their enemies; and at last, the glorious triumphs and joys of all the holy members of Christ's church. For a more particular account of this book, the reader may consult Dr. Wells's Paraphrase thereon.

Observations on the Revelations.

1st, THAT God curiously observes, and takes notice how all the members of his church behave themselves, whether well or ill; and as he will be sure to punish the bad according to their works, so he will not fail to reward all that persevere in his service ^d.

2dly, We have an instance of episcopal government, in the messages sent from Christ by St. John to the angels or bishops of the churches of Asia ^e. Which the more carefully and impartially any one reads, the more he will be convinced of the primitive government of the church by bishops. St. John directs his speech to *one* as superior to the rest, and makes him accountable for the faults of the whole flock; which most likely he would not have done, if other presbyters had been equally appointed over them. To this purpose it is farther to be considered, that the most early accounts of the primitive church assure us ^f, that bishops were settled in all those

^b In chap. ii. 6.
Vide et Grot. in loc.

^c Euseb. Hist. l. iii. c. 29. Gr. c. 23. *γῆμαι τῶν βουλομένων.*

^d Chap. ii. iii.

^e Chap. i. ii.

^f Bp. Potter's Government of the Ancient Church, ch. iv.

churches, at or near the time when the epistles in the Revelations were sent to them; particularly Onesimus at Ephesus^g, Melito at Sardis^h, and Polycarp at Smyrnaⁱ. Now St. John lived, as hath been observed, above threescore years after Christ's ascension; by which time the church was in a more settled state, as to its government, than it was before. It hath been objected, that the Apostle mentions more than one single person, *some of you*^k. But the answer is easy, that although that epistle is directed to the angel or bishop of Smyrna, yet it appears, that the particulars therein contained related not only to his single person, but to all the members of the church over which he presided; and that is the reason of the expression in the plural number: and the like is to be understood in reference to the other epistles.

And as for the universal Christian church next to the apostolical age, the most ancient accounts thereof give full evidence of this government, and more clearly explain, illustrate, and confirm what is mentioned concerning the same in the holy Scriptures: which the reader may be thoroughly satisfied in, by consulting the authors cited in the margin^l; and at the same time may remember, that every law or institution is best explained by the immediate subsequent practice thereupon; and that the primitive Christians had the best opportunity of knowing the minds of the apostles: nor is it credible, at so great a distance of the Christian churches, from east to west, that this constitution should be so early and universally received and submitted to, if it had not been established by the apostles, or the first founders of those churches: nor, lastly, can it be conceived that any of those, who were always ready to suffer death in defence of the doctrine and ordinances of Christ, would permit any change to be made in his institutions, in so important an affair as the government of the church. It is no proper reply to this argument, that we do not submit to the judgment of the ancient fathers in all points of doctrine, nor to all their prac-

^g Ignatius Epist. ad Ephes. ^h Euseb. Hist. lib. iv. c. 26. ⁱ Ignatius Epist. ad Polycarp. et Iren. lib. iii. c. 3. ^k Chap. ii. 10. and in other places. ^l Bp. Potter, ib. Bp. Beveridge's Codex Can. Eccles. Prim. l. ii. c. 11.

tices; in which however they might be mistaken, yet their testimony in plain matters of fact is not to be the less regarded.

3dly, All the seven once famous cities^m are in the hands of the Turks, by whom the Christian churches there are almost utterly ruinedⁿ; and the few Christians who live there are reduced to the most deplorable servitude, there being very few Christian families in Pergamus, and but one church, to which a priest is sent from Smyrna to officiate: not so much as one church in Thyatira, nor in Sardis: in Philadelphia there are four, and a considerable number of Christians, but oppressed and enslaved by the Turks: Laodicea is not at all inhabited: Ephesus is only a poor village, and in it are the ruins of their ancient magnificent churches: Smyrna hath two churches belonging to the Grecian Christians, and one to the Armenians, and a larger number of Christians live there than in the rest, but under the heavy yoke of barbarous Turks. Oh! how should we walk worthy of our Christian privileges, lest the case be ours also; ^o *I will come unto thee quickly, and remove thy candlestick out of his place.*

4thly, That nothing can befall the church but what God foresees and knows, and is pleased to permit; as is evident from this revelation beforehand to St. John, of what should afterwards come to pass.

Lastly, Although the meaning of many of the prophecies contained in this book may not be clearly understood now, yet hereafter the Christians may know them, and, especially by the event, adore the wisdom and providence of God. In the mean time, we may receive great edification from several parts of it: such as those noble hymns offered up to God and Christ^p: the precepts for adoration of one supreme God, in opposition to the worshipping of idols, or any creature^q: the comfort of relying on Christ's merits^r: lastly, the encouragement to a patient continuance in the faith, and a holy life, notwithstanding any present sufferings^s.

^m Mentioned chap. ii. 3.

ⁿ Dr. Smith *Septem Asia Ecclesiarum Notitia.*

^o Chap. ii. 5. ^p Chap. iv. 8, 11. v. 9, 10, 12, 13. ^q Chap. ix. 20. and xiv. 7.

and xxi. 8. ^r Chap. v. 9. and vii. 14. and xii. 11. ^s Chap. ii. 3, 10, 26. and xiv. 12, 13. and xvi. 15.

As Mr. Collyer's account of the Book of Revelation is but a short one, the following Analysis, taken chiefly from Mr. Daubuz's Commentary upon the Revelation, and from Dr. Newton's learned Dissertations on the Prophecies, it is hoped, will not be unacceptable to the Christian and curious reader, who wishes to be acquainted with this mysterious book.

IN chapter i. we have the title of the book ; *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* ; the scope and design of it, and the blessing on him that readeth, and on them that attend to it : the dedication to the seven churches of Asia, and a solemn preface to shew the great authority of the divine revealer. Then, the place the Apostle was in when the vision was revealed to him, Patmos, a desolate island in the Archipelago, whither St. John was banished in the reign of Nero, more probably than in that of Domitian. The revelation was given on the Lord's day. The manner and circumstances of the first vision, see 12th and following verses.

Chap. ii. iii. contain the seven epistles to the seven churches of Asia. These seven are particularly addressed, because they were under St. John's immediate inspection. These epistles are not prophetic, but peculiar to the church of that age ; however, the contents of them are of use and instruction to the church in all ages. The structure and form of these epistles is excellent. They are so far prophetic, as they contain certain predictions with regard to the churches, which were accomplished. The present state of these churches shew the truth of what St. John wrote to them, and should warn Christians of the judgments of God.

Chap. iv. The preparatory vision to things which must be hereafter. The scenery drawn in allusion to the encampment of the children of Israel in the wilderness, and to the tabernacle or temple.

Chap. v. A continuation of the preparatory vision, in order to shew the great importance of the prophecies here delivered. Future events are supposed to be written in a book. This book is sealed with seven seals, signifying so many periods of

prophecy. The Son of God, called *The Lion of the tribe of Judah*, alone qualified to open the seals; whereupon all creatures sing praises to God and to Christ.

Chap. vi. contains the opening of the seals. The first seal or period memorable for conquest. It commences with Vespasian, includes the conquest of Judea, and continues during the reign of the Flavian family, and the short reign of Nerva, about twenty-eight years. The second seal or period is noted for war and slaughter, denoted by the red horse. It commences with Trajan, and comprehends the horrid wars and slaughters of the Jews and Romans in the reigns of Trajan and Adrian. It continues during the reigns of Trajan and his successors by blood or adoption, about ninety-five years. The third seal or period under the emblem of a black horse, and his rider *with a pair of balances in his hand*, points out the strict execution of justice, and the procuration of corn and oil and wine. This period commences with Septimus Severus. He and Alexander Severus were just and severe emperors, and no less celebrated for procuring corn and oil to the Romans, in the time of a scarcity. This period continues during the reigns of the Septimian family, about forty-two years. The fourth seal or period under the emblem of a pale horse, and his rider's name Death, and hell following, shews that period to be distinguished by a concurrence of evils, war, and famine, and pestilence, and wild beasts. This period commences with Maximin, and continues to Diocletian; a period remarkable for the devastation of war, of famines, of pestilences and wild beasts, the length of it about fifty years. The fifth seal or period, upon the opening of which John *saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God*, is remarkable for a dreadful persecution of the Christians, called the tenth and last general persecution, and which was begun by Diocletian. From hence a memorable era, called the era of Diocletian, or the era of martyrs. The sixth seal or period is remarkable for great changes and revolutions, expressed by great commotions in the earth, and in the heavens. But no change upon earth could be greater, than the subversion of the Heathen, and the establishment of

the Christian religion. The like figures of speech are used by the prophets; (see Isaiah, Jeremiah, Joel, Haggai,) but the same thing is expressed afterwards in plainer terms.

Chap. vii. A continuation of the sixth seal or period, in which is given a description of the peace of the church in Constantine's time, and of the great accession of converts to it; not only of Jews, but of all nations. This period is from the reign of Constantine the Great to the death of Theodosius the Great, about seventy years.

Chap. viii. The seventh seal or period comprehends seven periods, distinguished by the sounding of seven trumpets, and before the sounding them there is silence in heaven for half an hour. This silence of half an hour alludes to a ceremony among the Jews; while the priest went into the temple to burn incense, all were silent, and the people without prayed to themselves. This shews that the peace of the church would continue but a short time. As the seals foretold the state of the Roman empire before and till it became Christian, so the trumpets foreshadow the fate of it afterwards. The design of the trumpets is to rouse the nations against the Roman empire. At the sounding of the first trumpet, Alaric and his Goths invade the Roman empire, twice besiege Rome, and set fire to it in several places. At the sounding of the second trumpet, Attila and his Huns waste the Roman provinces, and compel the eastern emperor, Theodosius the Second, and the western emperor, Valentinian the Third, to submit to shameful terms. At the sounding of the third trumpet, Genseric and his Vandals arrive from Africa, spoil and plunder Rome, and set sail again with immense wealth and innumerable captives. At the sounding of the fourth trumpet, Odoacer and the Heruli put an end to the very name of the western empire. Theodoric founds the kingdom of the Ostrogoths in Italy; and what remains of it to the Romans is annexed to the eastern empire, and Rome governed by a duke under the exarch of Ravenna. The three following trumpets are named *woe* trumpets, and they relate chiefly to the downfall of the western.

Chap. ix. contains a prophecy of the locusts, or the

Arabians under their false prophet Mahomet. At the sounding of the fifth trumpet, a star fallen from heaven opens the bottomless pit, and the sun and air are darkened. Mahomet is fitly compared to a blazing star, and the Arabians to locusts: and the sun and air were really darkened at that time by an eclipse. The locusts are commanded not to hurt any green thing, or any tree, but to hurt only the corrupt and idolatrous Christians. They fulfilled this their commission. They were to torment the Greek and Latin churches, but not to extirpate them. The locusts were repulsed as often as they besieged Constantinople. They are described so as to shew that not real but figurative locusts were intended. They are likened unto horses, and the Arabians were famous in all ages for their horses and horsemanship; and the description of them answers exactly to Mahomet's soldiers, and was fulfilled by them in every possible construction. We have also a prophecy of the Euphratean horsemen. At the sounding of the sixth trumpet the four angels or sultanies of the Turks and Othmans are loosed from the river Euphrates, who were prepared for three hundred and ninety-one years and fifteen days to slay the third part of men. The Turks had numerous armies, especially of cavalry; they delight in scarlet, blue, and yellow. The use of great guns and gunpowder was then among them. Their power to do hurt was in their tails, or the poisonous train of their religion. The remains of the Greek church among them are in a miserable condition. Yet the Latin or Western church is not at all reclaimed by the ruin of the Greek or Eastern church, but still persist in their idolatry and wickedness.

Chap. x. contains a preparatory vision to the prophecies relating to the Western church. St. John saw an angel with a little book, or codicil to the larger book of the Apocalypse, in his hand. This is properly disposed under the sixth trumpet, to describe the state of the Western church after the description of that of the Eastern. We cannot know what is meant by the seven thunders. Though the little book describes the calamities of the Western church, yet it is declared that they shall all have a happy period under the seventh

trumpet; therefore, St. John is desired to publish the contents of this little book, as well as the larger book of the Apocalypse.

Chap. xi. contains the contents of the little book, the measuring of the temple, to shew that during all this period there were some true Christians, who conformed to the rule and measure of God's word. The church to be trodden under foot by Gentiles and corrupt Christians in worship and practice forty and two months, or one thousand two hundred and sixty years. Some true witnesses however to protest against the corruptions of religion; and they are said to be two, because reformers have commonly appeared in pairs. They were to prophesy in sackcloth, as long as the corruption lasted. They have a most excellent character, and are invested with a most extensive power. They suffer, and are put to death; they rise again from the dead, and ascend into heaven. Some apply this prophecy of the death and resurrection of the witnesses to John Huss and Jerome of Prague, whose doctrine revived after their death, in their followers. Others to the Protestants of the league of Smalcald, who were entirely routed by the emperor Charles V. in the battle of Mulburg; but upon the change of affairs, the emperor was obliged, by the treaty of Passau, to allow them the free exercise of their religion. Some again to the massacre of the Protestants in France, and to Henry III.'s afterwards granting them the free exercise of their religion. Others again to latter events: Peter Jurieu to the persecution of the Protestants by Louis XIV.; Bishop Lloyd and Mr. Whiston to the Duke of Savoy's persecution of the Protestants in the valleys of Piedmont, and his re-establishing them afterwards. In all these cases there may be some resemblance, but none of these is the last persecution, and therefore this prophecy remains yet to be fulfilled. Dr. Newton has given an historical deduction, to shew that there have been some true witnesses, who have professed doctrines contrary to those of the Church of Rome, and that from the seventh century down to the Reformation. Among the principal of whom were the Albigenses and Waldenses in the thirteenth century;

the famous John Wiclif and the Lollards; John Huss and Jerome of Prague. Hence an answer to the Popish question, Where was your religion before Luther?

Chap. xii. contains an account of the church persecuted by the great red dragon. The church is represented by a mother bearing children to Christ. And the great red dragon is the heathen Roman empire. His jealousy of the church was from the beginning; but yet the church brought forth many children to Christ, and in time such as were promoted to the empire; particularly Constantine, who ruled all nations with a rod of iron. The woman flees into the wilderness, and the war in heaven represents the contest between the Heathen and the Christian religions. The Christian prevails, and Constantine himself and the Christians of his time describe his conquests under the same image. Still new woes, but for a short time, threatened to the inhabitants of the earth. The red dragon deposed, still persecutes the church, and attempts, under Julian, to restore the Pagan and ruin the Christian religion. The woman flees into the wilderness, and inundations of barbarous nations are excited to overwhelm the Christian religion; but instead of doing this, the Heathen conquerors submit to the religion of the conquered Christians. But the great red dragon practised another method of persecuting the Christians, as may be seen in the following chapter.

Chap. xiii. contains a description of the ten horned beast, successor to the great red dragon. Both Papists and Protestants agree that the beast represents the Roman empire. But the ten horned beast is not Pagan, but Christian, not imperial, but papal Rome. He is successor to the great red dragon. But for a more particular account of the rise and progress of papal power and tyranny, agreeable to the prophecy of the beast with ten horns and ten crowns, see Mede, Daubuz, and Newton.

Chap. xiv. contains a state of the true church in opposition to that of the beast. We have the first principal effort towards a reformation in the public opposition of emperors and bishops to the worship of saints and images in the eighth

and ninth centuries. Another effort by the Waldenses and Albigenses, who pronounced the Church of Rome to be the Apocalyptic Babylon, and denounced her destruction. The third effort by Martin Luther and his fellow reformers, who protested against all the corruptions of the Church of Rome, as destructive of salvation; and this is followed with a declaration from heaven to comfort them, *From henceforth the dead who die in the Lord are blessed*. The judgments of God upon the followers and adherents of the beast are represented under the figures, first of harvest, and then of vintage. These judgments are not yet fulfilled.

Chap. xv. contains a preparatory vision to the pouring out of the seven vials. These seven plagues belong to the seventh and last trumpet, or the third and last woe trumpet, and consequently are not yet fulfilled. Seven angels are appointed to pour them out.

Chap. xvi. contains the commission to pour out the seven vials, which are so many steps to the ruin of the Roman church, as the trumpets were of the ruin of the Roman empire. As Rome resembles Egypt in her crimes, so does she in her punishments. To be convinced of this, compare the pouring out of the several vials with the plagues, which God inflicted upon Egypt by the hand of Moses.

Chap. xvii. shews, that as Rome resembles Egypt in her plagues, so shall her fall be like that of Babylon. St. John is called to see the condemnation and execution of the great whore, and this character is more proper to modern than ancient Rome. But as to the description here given of spiritual Babylon, the inscription upon her forehead, her being drunken with the blood of the saints, how the ten kingdoms gave their power and strength to the beast, her fall and destruction, the lamentations of some and the rejoicings of others, the triumph of the church for God's judgments upon her, the victory and triumph of Christ over the beast and the false prophet; would the inquisitive reader be fully informed of these particulars, let him consult the above-mentioned learned authors. The fall and destruction of the beast is begun, and will be completed, when the Christian religion

is rightly known and practised, and when civil and religious liberty universally prevails.

Chap. xx. Satan is bound, and the famous millennium commences, or the resurrection of the saints, and their reign upon earth for a thousand years. The millennium is not yet fulfilled, even though the resurrection be taken figuratively: but the resurrection must be understood in a literal sense. And other prophets, as well as St. John, have foretold, that there shall be such a happy period as the millennium; but he only, that the martyrs shall rise to partake of it, and that it shall continue a thousand years. The Jewish and Christian church have both believed, that these thousand years would be the seventh millenary of the world. To prove this, many quotations from Jewish writers, and from the primitive fathers of the Christian church, might be adduced. The millennium was believed in the early times of Christianity, but grew into disrepute, because some, both Jewish and Christian writers, have debased it with a mixture of fables, because it is a doctrine opposite to the errors and tyranny of Rome, and because it has been by some abused to bad purposes, being made an engine of faction; and turbulent fanatics, under the pretence of saints, have aspired to dominion, and disturbed the peace of civil society. The doctrine of the millennium has now in a good measure obtained with pious and learned men that credit it once had in the Christian church. Great caution is however required in treating of this doctrine. It must not be pruned and lopped too short on one side, nor on the other allowed to grow too wild and luxuriant. After the millennium, Satan will be loosed again for a little time, to deceive the nations Gog and Magog. All that learned men have said concerning Gog and Magog is only conjecture. These are mystic names, and the last enemies of the Christian church, but who they shall be cannot be said with any degree of certainty. Next will follow the final overthrow of Satan, the general resurrection, and end of the world.

Chap. xxi. *A new heaven and a new earth* succeeded in the room of *the first heaven and the first earth*, which had

passed away at the general judgment. A prophecy of the new earth is, that *there is no more sea*. There is also a new Jerusalem, which shall be the habitation of the saints of the first resurrection, and it shall also be the habitation of the saints of the general resurrection. The new heaven and the new earth are not to take place till after the millennium; and the new Jerusalem is described in an assemblage of the sublimest, richest imagery of Ezekiel and other ancient prophets. See the description, Rev. xxi. 11, &c.

Chap. xxii. The first five verses of this chapter are a continuation of the description of the new Jerusalem. In the conclusion, the angel ratifies and confirms all these particulars by a repetition of the same solemn assurance which he had before given, that *these sayings are faithful and true*, that he was commissioned by the same God, who had inspired the ancient prophets; and a blessing too is pronounced upon those who *keep the sayings of the prophecy of this book*. St. John testifieth himself to be the person who *saw and heard these things*; and he who revealed them, not only attesteth them to be true, but will also come speedily to accomplish them; to which St. John answers, and in him the whole church, *Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus*. He closeth all with the usual apostolical benediction, wishing *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ* to the churches of Asia in particular, and to all Christians in general.

The conclusion (to use the words of Dr. Newton) is truly excellent, as well as all other parts of this book; and nothing could be contrived to leave these things with a stronger impression upon the mind of the reader. In the whole, from first to last, appears the piety of the divine revealer, *the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and end, the Author and Finisher* of every good work, and this more especially.

The Conclusion.

THUS we have gone through the particular books of the Old and New Testament, and observed the chief designs and intentions of them. And now to conclude. Let us consider

seriously, and lay it to heart, that by hearing and reading what is contained in the holy Bible, *viz.* the glorious privileges which belong to pious person, of being the children of God, and heirs of heaven; the exhortations and instructions for an holy life; the gracious promises to holiness, and the threatenings against sinful lusts and impiety; the consolations in trouble, and the Christian arguments of patience and such like: I say, by hearing and reading these things that are set down in this holy book, the same which we now have, the ancient Christians became so holy and truly religious, so exemplary in their lives, so diligent in their duties, so devout and charitable, so free from sinful pollutions, so patient and joyful in sufferings, especially when it was for the cause of Christ and religion; that it must needs be a great aggravation of our unfruitfulness, and our condemnation must be the heavier, if the same holy Scriptures work not in us a care to live godly, to avoid sins, and cheerfully submit to the Divine will: for the more excellent the doctrine is, the more noble the reward propounded: and the more dreadful the punishment threatened, the more inexcusable will be our negligence and disobedience. Whereas, on the other hand, if we so read and meditate upon the oracles of God, contained in the holy Scriptures, as to become still more and more the servants of God, and nearer to heaven, how should we praise God for his goodness and providence in preserving this holy book for our use! that whereas so many thousands in the world are ignorant of God and his word, we should know him and his heavenly will so far, as would make us here the holy and lively members of his church, and hereafter place us on the right hand, in order to hear that joyful invitation, *Come, ye blessed children of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*

Grant to us, O Lord, in this world knowledge of thy truth,
and in the world to come life everlasting. *Amen.*

APPENDIX:

Containing some Remarks, taken chiefly from modern travellers of undoubted credit, concerning Palestine, where the Jews lived, and other parts of the Eastern countries, and the present customs of the inhabitants; which illustrate divers passages of the holy Scriptures.

I. **THERE** are a people in the eastern countries who have no settled abode, but dwell in tents, and remove with their families and beasts for the convenience of grass and water^a; the country lying open without inclosures: “Their whole estate^b consists in the numerous flocks and herds, which they sell upon occasion, to supply themselves with what they want at the towns they pass by. They are courteous to strangers, kindly entertaining them with such provisions as their flocks afford, &c.” After such manner it seems that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lived, and pitched their tents, and had flocks and cattle, &c.^c

^a The Arabians are divided into two sorts; some of them living in towns and villages; others, having no fixed settled habitations, living in tents, and remove from one part of the country to another, according as their necessities compel, or conveniences incite them. Pocock. Specimen Hist. Arab. p. 2. Compare 2 Maccab. xii. 11, 12. and Just. Hist. l. ii. non longe ab initio. Thevenot's Trav. part ii. b. ii. c. 13. Ray's Collection of Travels, tom. ii. c. v. p. 74. edit. Lond. 1693. Hor. lib. iii. od. 24. *Campestres melius Scythæ (Quorum plaustra vagas rite trahunt domos) Vivunt, et rigidi Getæ, Immetata quibus jugera liberas Fruges et Cere-rem ferunt.* ^b Dr. Smith apud Ray's Collection of Travels, tom. ii. ch. v. p. 74. edit. Lond. 1693. These are some of the better sort of Arabs; others of them plunder and rob all they meet with. Thevenot, Trav. part i. book ii. ch. 32. Rauwolf apud Ray's Collection of Travels, tom. i. part iii. c. 2. Maundrell's Travels, March 21, p. 56. ^c Gen. xii. 8. and in divers other places of that book.

II. There are in the same countries, still to be seen, a multitude^d of cells or sepulchres for corpses hewn in the firm rocks; which are, as it were, coffins of stone in niches, in the sides of grotts or chambers, cut in the rocks, according to the ancient manner of burying in those places: several of these cells being eight feet and a half in length, and three feet three inches square. One especially is now to be seen near Jerusalem, consisting of several large rooms with the coffins of stone above mentioned, all cut out of the rocks, supposed to be the sepulchre of the sons of David^e. Hence we read of burying in caves or sepulchres hewn in the rocks^f.

III. It is usual now in the same countries to have a market for slaves^g, where men and women are exposed to sale unto such as have occasion for them. So it was anciently; accordingly we read that Potiphar bought Joseph of the Ishmaelites, to whom his brethren had sold him^h; and there is mention made of servants or slaves *bought with money*ⁱ. And to this custom of buying slaves the Apostle alludes, saying, that we are *bought with a price*, (*viz.* the blood of the Son of God,) and therefore we should duly serve him^k.

IV. The way of travelling for merchants^l and others in the eastern countries is in great companies, to secure themselves against robbers, with a vast number of loaden camels and asses, often many hundreds together, which they call caravans. So it seems it was in Jacob's time, when he was in the land of Canaan: *His sons lift up their eyes and looked, and behold a company of Ishmaelites (a caravan) came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt*^m.

V. It is now the custom in those parts (not as with us to thresh, but) to “ⁿ tread out their corn with oxen, drawing a

^d Maundrell's Travels, March 5, 8, 28. and May 2. Sandys' Trav. l. iii. p. 175. edit. Lond. 1615. ^e 2 Chron. xxxii. 33. ^f Gen. xlix. 29, &c. John xi. 38. Matt. xxvii. 60. ^g Ray's Collection, tom. i. part i. ch. 8. p. 89. and part iii. ch. 10. p. 337. ^h Gen. xxxvii. xxxix. ⁱ Gen. xvii. 23. ^k I Cor. vi. 20. See also Matt. xviii. 25. ^l Ray, *ibid.* tom. i. part ii. ch. 10. p. 210. Thevenot, part i. book i. ch. 59. ^m Gen. xxxvii. 25. ⁿ Dr. Smith apud Ray, *ibid.* tom. ii. ch. v. p. 70. Somewhat like this, Thevenot's Trav. part ii. book i. c. 5. p. 24.

square plank board studded with flints. In some places they only make oxen or horses tread out the corn with their feet^o." So the Israelites used to do. Hence, ^p *Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out (or thresheth) the corn.* ^q *Ephraim is as an heifer that is taught, and loveth to tread out the corn.*

VI. Another general custom of the eastern countries is to "send^r a present, in order to procure a favourable reception. It is counted uncivil to visit in this country, without an offering in hand: all great men expect it, as a tribute due to their character and authority; and look upon themselves affronted, and indeed defrauded, when that compliment is omitted." And in the Mogul's country, it is esteemed "rather a mark of respect on the supplicant's part, than of avarice of the officer's^s." Thus of old Jacob ordered his sons to *carry a present*, when they went to Joseph as governor of Egypt^t; and again, ^u *There is not a present to bring the man of God.* And, ^x *the children of Belial despised Saul, and brought him no presents.* The wise men that came from the east to adore Christ as King, *brought him a present of gold, frankincense, and myrrh^y.*

VII. The houses which are now in Jerusalem, and many other parts of the East, are built low; the top whereof is plain and plastered, and hath battlements almost a yard high, by the walls surmounting their roofs: for they cover their houses with a flat roof or floor, so that they may walk upon them; and in the day-time they shelter themselves from the sun within the chamber under this plastered floor, and after sunset they walk, eat, and sleep upon it^z. So it seems the Jews formerly built, and were commanded to make *a battlement for the roof^a.* Rahab hid the spies *upon the roof of her*

^o Thevenot's Travels, *ibid.* ^p Deut. xxv. 4. ^q Hos. x. 11. ^r Maundrell's Travels, March 11, p. 26. Tavernier's Relation of Tonquin, ch. i. p. 2.
^s Manouchy's History of the Moguls, near the end, p. 361. edit. Lond. 1722.
^t Gen. xliii. 11, 26. ^u In 1 Sam. ix. 7. ^x 1 Sam. x. 27. ^y Matt. ii. 11.
 See also Gen. xxxii. 13. 1 Kings x. 2, 10, 25. 2 Kings viii. 8. ^z Ray's Collection, tom. i. part i. ch. 2. p. 23. and part iii. ch. 2. p. 283. Morison's Itinerary, part i. book iii. ch. 2. Le Bruyn's Voyage, ch. 38. and 65. and his Draught of Jerusalem, chap. 53. Sandys' Travels, book ii. iii. p. 116, 119, 149. ^a Deut. xxii. 8.

house^b; and David *walked upon the roof of his house*^c. To which Christ alludes, bidding his disciples to preach openly *upon the house-tops*, or in public^d. And *Peter went up upon the house-top to pray*^e.

VIII. The cedars “grow^f now amongst the snow, near the highest part of Lebanon, and are remarkable as well for their own age and largeness, as for those frequent allusions made unto them in the word of God. Here are some of them very old, and of a prodigious bulk, and others younger, and of a smaller size: of the former I could only reckon up sixteen, the latter were very numerous. I measured one of the largest, and found it twelve yards and six inches in girt, and yet sound, and thirty-seven yards in the spread of its boughs.” This illustrates the passage where Solomon is said to discourse of trees; *from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon, even to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall*^g. And, “*The righteous shall flourish like a cedar in Lebanon.* And, “*The boughs thereof were like the goodly cedar trees:* and many other places in the holy Scripture.

IX. The eastern people at this time do not^k keep their wine in such bottles as we do, but in skins, especially goat skins: in like manner they kept wine^l anciently. To which our Saviour alludes, “*Neither do men put new wine into old bottles, (or skins,) else the bottles break, by the fermenting spirits of the new wine bursting the old bottles, or skins.*

X. “Men and women, young and old, in the eastern countries, use to makeⁿ a thin paste of galls, and calcined copperas, to beautify themselves, and to keep their eyes from rheums. With it they blacken their lips, and make a ring round about their eyes, in the same manner as our ring-doves have about their necks: these paintings they have had anciently, and some of them they have prepared of stibium

^b Josh. ii. 6, 8. ^c 2 Sam. xi. 2. ^d Matt. x. 27. ^e Acts x. 9. See also 1 Sam. ix. 25. 2 Sam. xvi. 22. Matt. xxiv. 17. Mark ii. 4. ^f Maundrell, *ibid.* May 9, p. 142. ^g 1 Kings iv. 33. ^h Psal. xcii. 12. ⁱ Psal. lxxx. 10. ^k Ray's *Collection of Travels*, tom. i. part i. ch. viii. p. 94. Maundrell, *ibid.* March 12. at the end of that day. ^l Homer. *Odyss.* apud Ham. in Matt. ix. 17. ^m Matt. ix. 17. ⁿ Ray, *ibid.* tom. i. part i. ch. 6. p. 81.

or antimony." Of these paintings of the eyes we read in several places; ^p *For whom thou didst wash thyself, paintedst thine eyes, &c.* and, ^q *Jezebel painted her face*; in Hebrew it is, *put her eyes in painting*: so also, ^r *Though thou deckest thee with ornaments of gold, though thou reutest thy face, in Hebrew, thine eyes, with painting.*

XI. The present state of some great cities, whose ruin was foretold by the ancient prophets.

1. Nineveh was the ancient seat of the Assyrian monarchs, who captivated the ten tribes; so large, that the passing through it took up three days' journey ^s. "There is nothing of it now ^t to be seen but some hillocks, which the people of that country say are its foundations;" according to the prophecy of Nahum against it ^u, *With an overflowing flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof.*

2. That once famous city of Babylon in Chaldea, which was esteemed the wonder of the world; whose walls, being of a prodigious height, are said to be in compass 480 furlongs, or 60 of our English miles; which the great monarch Nebuchadnezzar made his seat, and because he much enlarged it, boasted, *Is not this great Babylon which I have built?* (who also carried away captive the Jews;) although it may be known where it stood, by its situation, and several ancient and delicate antiquities, which are still standing thereabout in great desolation; is ^v now, "with its magnificence and glorious buildings, quite desolated, and lieth in the dust; there is not so much as a house to be seen, and it appears as if one were in the middle of a desert; so that every one that passes through it, hath great reason to admire with astonishment how it is now reduced to such a desolation and wilderness, that the very shepherds cannot abide to fix their tents to inhabit it." So strictly are the prophecies verified which we read, ^w *And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and*

^p Ezek. xxiii. 40.

^q 2 Kings ix. 30.

^r Jer. iv. 30.

^s Jonah iii. 3.

^t Thevenot's Travels, part ii. b. i. c. 11.

^u Chap. i. 8.

^v Rauwolf apud

Ray's Collection of Travels, tom. i. part ii. ch. 7. p. 175, 178.

^w Isa. xiii. 19,

&c.

Gomorrhah; it shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there, neither shall the shepherds make their folds there. The prophet adds^x, *Wild beasts of the desert shall live there:* and so St. Jerome tells us, that in his time (about the year 400) it was “the king’s hunting place^y,” and Benjamin, in his Itinerary, says of the ruins of Nebuchadnezzar’s palace there, that “men dare not enter in for serpents and scorpions which possess the place^z.”

3. Tyre, a wealthy city, and of great trading for merchandise, and as such mentioned in Isaiah^a, *whose merchants were princes, and honourable in the earth*^b, is now a “mere^c Babel of broken walls, pillars, and vaults, there being not so much as one entire house left. Its present inhabitants are only a few poor wretches, harbouring themselves in the vaults, and subsisting chiefly upon fishing; who seem to be preserved in this place, by a divine Providence, as a visible argument how God has fulfilled his word concerning Tyre, *viz. I will make thee like the top of a rock, thou shalt be a place to spread dry nets upon*^d.”

XII. Upon mount Calvary, there is “^e a hole in the natural rock, said to be the very same in which the foot of our Lord’s cross was fixed: at about a yard and a half distant from the hole is seen that memorable cleft in the rock, said to have been made by the earthquake which happened at the suffering of the God of nature; when (as St. Matthew witnesseth) *the rocks rent*^f. This cleft, as to what now appears of it, is about a span wide, at its upper part, and two deep, after which it closes; but it opens again below, and runs down to an unknown depth in the earth. That this rent was made by the earthquake, there is only tradition to prove; but that it is a natural and genuine breach, and not counterfeited by any art, the sense and reason of every one that sees it may convince him; for the sides of it fit like two tallies to

^x Ver. 21. ^y In Isa. xiii. ult. ^z Benjamin Itiner. p. (mili) 134. edit. Leyd. 1633. See also Jer. li. 26—30. ^a Isa. xxiii. 8. ^b Ver. 8. ^c Maundrell, March 20, p. 48. ^d Ezek. xxvi. 14. ^e Maundrell, March 26, p. 73, 74. ^f Matt. xxvii. 51.

each other, and yet it runs into such intricate windings, as could not be well counterfeited by art, nor arrived at by any instrument."

XIII. In the countries ^g near Mesopotamia, "the women made dough for cakes, which are about a finger thick, and about the bigness of a trencher, and lay them on hot stones, and keep them a turning; at length they fling ashes and embers over them, and so bake them throughly. They are very good to eat, and very savoury." This seems to explain Sarah's making cakes on the hearth ^h.

XIV. "We were sufficiently instructed by experience ⁱ, what the Psalmist means by *the dew of Hermon*; our tents being as wet with it as if it had rained all night." This was spoken of that Hermon near Tabor.

XV. "The water ^k of the sea of Galilee (which is also called the sea of Tiberias, or the lake of Genesareth) hath plenty of fish in it; on what side soever I cast my eye along the shore, I saw a great many fish swim." So it seems it was in Christ's time. Hence we read of Simon Peter, and others, casting their nets, and fishing in the sea of Galilee or Tiberias ^l. To the same purpose Josephus, a Jew, wrote concerning the lake of Genesareth, that "it had in it great variety of fish, which for taste and shape were not to be found any where else ^m."

XVI. The rite of *discalceation*, or putting ⁿ off the shoes or sandals, is still used by the eastern people at their coming into sacred places, (like putting off the hat with us.) So do the Jews now, when they enter into their synagogues, (and the Turks at their mosques or temples.) As it was commanded Moses, ^o *Put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.*

^g Rauwolf apud Ray's Collection of Travels, tom. i. part ii. chap. ix. p. 201.

^h Gen. xviii. 6. likewise Exod. xii. 39. 1 Kings xvii. 13. and xix. 6. 1 Sam. xiii. 8. Hosea vii. 8. ⁱ Maundrell, *ibid.* March 22. ^k Le Bruyn's Voyage, chap. 61.

^l Matt. iv. and John xxi. ^m Joseph. Wars, book iii. chap. 18. ⁿ Thevenot's Travels, part i. chap. 37. Mede, book ii. of the reverence of God's house, §. 3.

^o Exod. iii. 5.

XVII. The ancient custom still continues in the eastern parts, of employing *eunuchs*^p, or gelded men, in the chiefest offices, as of treasurers, stewards over their goods, cattle, wives, and children, &c. Thus queen Candace's officer of great authority, and chief treasurer, was an eunuch^q.

XVIII. The way of *divination by arrows* was usual among the ancient Arabians^r; as when any person was to undertake an affair of moment, he put three arrows into a vessel, on one of which was written, *My God hath commanded*; on the other, *My God hath forbidden*; and on the third, *Nothing*. If the first were drawn out, the person pursued his design; if the second, he forebore; and if the third, he drew on till one of the former was drawn. This may explain the way of the king of Babylon's divination, when, among other methods of it, it is said, *He made his arrows bright*^s.

XIX. When the Turks *salute one another*, they uncover not the head; to do so would be an affront; but only laying their hand upon their breast, and bowing a little, they say, *Sela meon aleicom*^t, which is as much as to say, *Peace be with you*. This was the ancient way of salutation. And the East Indians^u, when they salute each other, uncover not the head, but often throw themselves flat on their faces at each other's feet. Thus in Scripture, they saluted, by *bowing*, and sometimes *to the ground*, to shew the greater respect^x, and wished each other *peace*, (as hath been observed in the first general rule for the interpreting holy Scripture, numb. vii. ;) and not only in civil, but religious worship, the eastern people used prostration, or falling down flat on their faces oft-times when they said their prayers, as the Mahometans do. This explains

^p Ray, *ibid.* tom. i. part iii. c. 2. p. 269. Thevenot's Trav. part i. b. i. c. 18. Dampier's Voyages, vol. ii. c. 4. of Tonquin. ^q Acts viii. 27. See what is said of that passage in Acts viii.

^r Pocock's Specimen Hist. Arab. p. 327, &c. et Hieronymus in Ezek. xxi. 21. ^s Ezek. xxi. 21. ^t Thevenot's Travels, part i.

book i. chap. 22. ^u Dampier's second volume of his Voyages, chap. vii. and vol. i. chap. iv. edit. 4. A Moskito Indian seeing his brother, a Moskito man, threw himself flat on his face at his feet, who helping him up, and embracing him, fell flat with his face on the ground at the other's feet, and was by him taken up also. ^x Gen. xxxiii. 3, 6, 7.

the words^y, *I fell down before the Lord*^z; and Christ *fell on his face and prayed*^a.

XX. “The religion of the inhabitants of Tonquin^b, in the East Indies, is Paganism, and they are great idolaters; nevertheless they own an omnipotent, supreme, overruling power, which beholds both them and their actions; and so far takes notice of them, as to reward the good, and punish the bad, in the other world.” This farther confirms what has been said in the seventh general remark on the Pentateuch, concerning the idolatry of the heathen world.

XXI. In the East Indies, and in Africa, men *purchase their wives*^c of their fathers, brothers, or nearest male relations; according to the ninth general remark on the Pentateuch.

XXII. “There are store of *ostriches*^d in the desarts of Arabia; they are the simplest of fowls, and symbols of folly: when they have laid their eggs, they leave them, and unmindful where, sit on those they meet with.” This explains the words of Job^e, where it is said of the ostrich, *which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in the dust, and forgetteth that the foot may crush them; she is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers; because God hath deprived her of wisdom, &c.* Hence some have fancied, that the ostrich is hatched only by the hot sand; whereas, however the eggs are left and warmed therein, and are forgotten by the proper female, yet they are hatched by incubation, or sitting on them, (as Mr. Sandys found,) though not always by the same female that laid them, she often forgetting where they are; and if they are not sat on by one or other hen ostrich, they are spoiled, instead of hatched^f by the sun or sand.

XXIII. There are divers opinions and doctrines observed by travellers to be amongst the modern Jews agreeable to

^y Deut. ix. 18. ^z So Job i. 20. Dan. iii. 7. Matt. ii. 11. ^a Matt. xxvi. 39. ^b Dampier's Voyages, vol. ii. chap. 3. ^c Dampier, *ibid.* vol. ii. chap. 3. and near the end of the second volume of *Natal in Afric.* ^d Sandys' Travels, book ii. of the Arabians, near the end, page 139. ^e Chap. xxxix. 14, &c. ^f Sandys, *ibid.* Compare Bochart de Animal. apud Poole's Synopsis in Job xxxix. 14, 15, 16.

those of their forefathers; which confirm and explain some passages of the New Testament. As,

1st, That of their continued expectancy of a triumphant Messiah ^g, whose “appearance they believe shall be warlike, and that he shall lead all their enemies captives, and triumph in the spoils of Esau, (*i. e.* all the Gentile world.) They imagine there shall be a general surrender of the Edomites, (that is, Geniiles,) who shall submit themselves to his rod; when all Edom, that is, all mankind who are not of their religion, shall become their hewers of wood, and drawers of water.” This was the common notion amongst them in our Saviour’s time; who, in opposition thereto, declared, that his *kingdom was not of this world*. However, this mistake of theirs occasioned their being offended at him, and not owning him for the true Messiah, as hath been observed in the second general remark on the holy Gospels.

2dly, “There are none to be met with among them (the Jews) who adhere to the Old Bible without Talmud traditions ^h.” In this they imitate their forefathers, whom Christ reproves for their *traditions* ⁱ.

3dly, Though the Bible be not denied the people’s reading among the Jews, yet the giving the sense thereof belongs only to the masters or rabbies; “in ^k whose interpretation of the text. the vulgar, upon pain of excommunication, are bound to acquiesce.” And so their present masters usurp the authority over the faith, as their old rabbies were wont to do in Christ’s time; who charged his followers not to be called *rabbi, father, or master* ^l.

4thly, “All hope and promise of future reward is confined to themselves, (the Jews,) and to those who are not of their religion, they allow nothing but a total perdition of their being ^m.” Thus in the first publishing the Gospel, the converted Jews, and even the apostles themselves at first, could

^g Addison’s Present State of the Jews, chap. 1. ^h Addison, *ibid.* ^l Matt. xv. For which see the third general remark on the holy Gospels. ^k Addison’s Present State of the Jews, chap. 2. ⁱ Matt. xxiii. See the tenth general remark on the Gospels, number i. ^m Addison’s State, &c. chap. 3.

not believe that God should *grant to the Gentiles repentance unto salvation*".

5thly, The modern Jews take especial care, that they neither touch bread, or any thing that is eatable, a book, or any holy thing, before they "wash their hands and feet^o." So that they still continue to observe the traditions, which Christ rebuked them for^p.

ⁿ See above on the Acts of the Apostles.

^o Leo Modena, part i. chap. 7.

^p See the third general remark on the holy Gospels, num. iii.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE,

ACCORDING TO

Archbishop Usher's Annals, and the Epitome thereof in the Index of our larger English Bibles, and Mr. Echard's Tables; wherein the computation is according to the Vulgar Æra, or Account, which commences Anno Mundi 4004.

- 1656 **T**HE flood, sixteen hundred and fifty-six years after the beginning of the world.
- 1771 The Assyrian monarchy founded by Nimrod.
- 2083 Abraham's call and journey to Canaan, from his own country Mesopotamia; four hundred and twenty-seven years after the flood.
- 2298 Jacob with his family goes down into Egypt, where they and their posterity lived comfortably one hundred and twenty-nine years.
- 2427 The beginning of the bondage of the Israelites in Egypt.
- 2513 The Israelites delivered out of the Egyptian bondage and slavery, after their being under it fourscore and six years, and two hundred and fifteen years after Jacob's going down into Egypt.
- 2553 They go over Jordan into the promised land of Canaan, forty years after their deliverance out of Egypt.
- 2599 The Judges, who continued a little above three hundred years.
- 2909 The Kings, of which the first was Saul, then David, and next Solomon.
- 3000 The temple of Solomon, or the first temple, finished (after he had been seven years in building it) four hundred and forty-seven years after their entrance into Canaan, and one thousand and five years before Christ.
- 3029 The division of the kingdom into Judah and Israel, four hundred and seventy-six years after their entrance into Canaan.

Affairs of the Assyrians.

- 3257 A conspiracy being entered into against Sardanapalus, the last of the old Assyrian monarchs, the monarchy is divided between Arbaces, (called Tiglathpileser, 2 Kings xv. 29.) who resided at Nineveh, and was esteemed king of Assyria; and Belesis, (called Baladan, 2 Kings xx. 12.) who resided at Babylon, and was king thereof, and of the country round about, called Babylonia, or Chaldea.
- 3276 Salmaneser succeeds Tiglathpileser as king of Assyria, and resides at Nineveh.
- 3289 Sennacherib succeeds Salmaneser

Affairs of Israel and Judah.

- 3283 The captivity of the kingdom of Israel by Salmaneser, king of Assyria, seven hundred and thirty years

Affairs of the Assyrians.

- as king of Assyria, and resides at Nineveh.
- 3294 Esarhaddon succeeds in the kingdom of Assyria.
- 3323 He reunites Babylon in Chaldea (which had been seized on by Belesis and his successors) to the Assyrian monarchy.
- 3378 Nabopolassar being a Babylonian, and commander under the king of Assyria and Chaldea, with some aid, assaults and overthrows Nineveh, the ancient royal seat, (according to the prophecy of Nahum,) and makes himself king of Babylon in Chaldea, and also chief of the Assyrian monarchy. So he is termed king of Assyria, 2 Kings xxiii. 29.

Affairs of Israel and Judah.

after their entrance into Canaan, and two hundred and fifty-four years after the division.

Affairs of Babylon.

- 3394 Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, marches with a great army towards Euphrates, in order to give a check to the Babylonians.

Necho succeeds in his expedition against the Babylonians near Euphrates; and makes all Syria, with the country of the Jews, subject to him.

- 3397 Nabopolassar, king of Babylon and Assyria, about a year before his death, takes his son Nebuchadnezzar partner in his kingdom, and sends him with an army first against the Egyptians at Euphrates, whom he subdued; and then against the Jews, who had become subject to Necho, on his success against the Babylonians.
- 3398 Nebuchadnezzar marches against Jerusalem, and makes it subject to him, and orders many youths of the best quality to be sent away to Babylon, Dan. i. 3. together with great treasures out of the king's palace and the temple.
- 3404 Nebuchadnezzar, being (on notice of the death of his father) returned to Babylon, sends another army against Jehoiakim, king of Judah, who had rebelled against him. Jehoiakim is slain, and the kingdom laid waste, and his son Jehoiachin made king.
- 3405 Nebuchadnezzar again comes against Jerusalem, takes king Jehoiachin and many others captive,

Affairs of Judah.

- 3394 Josiah, king of Judah, designing to stop Necho, king of Egypt, in his march against the Babylonians, is slain at Megiddo; and Jehoahaz, his son, whom the people had made king, is deposed by Necho on his return homewards; who sets up Eliakim, another son of Josiah, in his stead, and changes his name to Jehoiakim, 2 Kings xxiii. 30, &c. but carries Jehoahaz in Egypt, where he died.
- 3397 The time approaching for the destruction and captivity of the kingdom of Judah, God sends Jeremiah the prophet to forewarn them of it, and if possible to reclaim them, Jer. xxv. 8, &c. but all in vain.
- 3398 Jehoiakim is become tributary to the Babylonians; and the captivity of the kingdom of Judah is begun by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. From whence the seventy years of their captivity are reckoned; one hundred and fifteen years after the destruction of the kingdom of Israel by Salmaneser. Daniel, being carried among the captives, was preferred in Nebuchadnezzar's court, for interpreting his dream.

Affairs of Babylon.

- and sends them to Babylon, and makes Zedekiah king of Judah.
- 3416 Upon Zedekiah's revolt, Nebuchadnezzar comes once more against Jerusalem, and takes it, puts out Zedekiah's eyes, and carries him and many others captive to Babylon.

Affairs of Judah.

- 3416 Jerusalem and the first temple burnt, and the Babylonian captivity finished, (in 18 years from the beginning of it,) eight hundred and sixty-three years after their entrance into Canaan, four hundred and sixteen years after the temple had been built, and five hundred and eighty-eight years before Christ.

Affairs of Babylon.

- 3435 Nebuchadnezzar for his pride is distracted, and driven among beasts.
- 3442 After seven years he recovers, acknowledges the Divine power, and is restored to his kingdom; but soon after dies.
- 3442 Evil-Merodach, his son, succeeds in the kingdom.
- 3444 Neriglissar, Evil-Merodach's sister's husband, slays him, and succeeds. This Neriglissar, being jealous of the united forces of the Medes and Persians, designed a war against them; which, about twenty years after he began it, ended with the ruin of the Babylonian monarchy, and occasioned the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity.
- 3445 Cyrus son of Cambyses, king of Persia, and nephew to Cyaxares, king of Media, is chosen general of the army of the Medes and Persians; by whom Neriglissar, king of Babylon, is slain in battle; and his son
- 3448 Laborosoarchad (who was also grandson to Nebuchadnezzar, on his daughter's side) succeeds: he is slain by some of his own people.
- 3449 Nabonidus, called in Scripture Belshazzar, son of Evil-Merodach, (and so another grandson to Nebuchadnezzar, on his son's side; in which respect Nebuchadnezzar, according to the Scripture style, is called his *father*, that is, ancestor, Dan. v. 2.) succeeds in the kingdom of Babylon, and was the last king thereof.

Affairs of the Jews.

- The Jews remain captives in Babylon.
- Jehoiachin, or Jeconiah, being a captive in Babylon, has favour shewn him after thirty-seven years imprisonment there, Jer. lii. 31, &c.
- Daniel is preferred in Belshazzar's court, Daniel v.

- 3465 Cyrus, having routed the Babylonian army, besieges the city of Babylon.
- 3466 Belshazzar's feast, and the handwriting on the wall denouncing the end of his reign, and his kingdom

Affairs of Babylon.

being given to the Medes and Persians.

Belshazzar is slain. With him ended the monarchy of the Assyrians or Chaldeans; and Cyrus having taken the city of Babylon, founded the Persian monarchy; but for the present left the government to his uncle, Cyaxares, who was king of Media, and called in Scripture,

Darius the Median, Dan. v. 31. Hence the government was styled that of the Medes and Persians.

3467

Darius the Median governed the affairs of the empire of Babylon for two years, and then died.

Affairs of the Jews.

Darius's decree against making any petition for 30 days, but to himself, occasions Daniel's being cast into the lion's den, Dan. vi.

Daniel having considered the 70 years captivity (foretold by Jeremiah, ch. xxix. 10.) as now expiring, prays for the deliverance of the people. God sends the angel Gabriel to confirm his hopes, and also to foretel to him the Messiah, the spiritual Redeemer of his church, after seventy weeks of years, or seventy times seven, that is, four hundred and ninety years, Dan. ix.

Note, That from Cyrus's extinguishing of the Babylonian monarchy, and beginning the Persian, the Jews in their own country were governed by the high-priest and Sanhedrim, or great council; but under subjection to the Persian monarchy for about two hundred and eight years, till Alexander's conquest of the Persians.

Affairs of the Persians.

3468 Cyrus had now the possession of the whole eastern empire, by the death of his father Cambyses, king of Persia, and his uncle Darius, king of Media; and so he became the first monarch, himself dying seven years afterwards.

3475 Cambyses the Second, his eldest son, succeeds; but by his extravagant behaviour, gave an opportunity to one of the

3482 Persian Magi, (or Smerdi) called Artaxerxes in Ezra iv. 7, 16, to usurp the government: against whom seven of the Persian princes conspire, and slew him; and hearing that Cambyses also was dead, they set up

Affairs of the Jews.

The seventy years captivity are expired:—And

Cyrus releases the Jews, five hundred and thirty-six years before Christ.

3469 The Jews set up the altar for the offering of their sacrifices to God; and lay the foundation of the second temple, in the second year after their return, Ezra iii.

3470 But the Samaritans, being not accepted as helpers in the building, maliciously bribed some of Cyrus's courtiers, and hindered it all his reign, Ezra iv. 5.

3475 Cambyses the Second is supposed to be that Ahasuerus, in Ezra iv. 6. whom the Samaritans solicited to discourage the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem.

3483 Artaxerxes also forbade the Jews to build, on the spiteful suggestion of the Samaritans, Ezra iv. 7, 16.

Affairs of the Persians.

3483 Darius, one of their number, surnamed Hystaspes, (because one Hystaspes was his father,) to succeed in the government.

3489 -----

3519 Xerxes succeeds his father Darius, as likewise the following Persian kings were each of them the sons of their parents, who reigned before them, except the last mentioned, who was of the royal seed, though not by immediate descent.

3531 Artaxerxes succeeds, surnamed Longimanns, by reason of the length of his hands. He was very favourable to the Jews; and is supposed to be that Ahasnerus who married Esther, by whom the Jews were preserved from the destruction contrived by Haman, Esther ii. &c.

3581 Darius Nothus, whose proper name was Ochus, succeeds in the empire.

3600 Artaxerxes Mnemon, so called by reason of his great memory.

3644 Ochus, called also Artaxerxes.

3666 Arogus, or Arses.

3668 Darius, whose right name was Codomannus, who was afterwards conquered by Alexander the Great.

3674 Alexander the Great, having conquered the Persians, founded the Macedonian or Grecian empire.

Affairs of the Jews.

3484 Under Darius, in his second year, by the incitement of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, the building of the temple goes on, Ezra v. 6.

— The second temple finished in the sixth year of Darius, and dedicated with great joy, Ezra vi. about 20 years after the foundation thereof was laid under Cyrus, and five hundred and fifteen years before Christ.

3537 Ezra a priest, and learned in the law of Moses, obtains a commission from Artaxerxes to set in order the commonwealth of the Jews, and to reform the church at Jerusalem, Ezra vii. sixty-nine years after their return from captivity.

3550 Nehemiah also, a religious Jew, but preferred to be cup-bearer to Artaxerxes, procures a commission from him, to finish the building of the walls of Jerusalem, and farther to reform and settle the Jewish church and state; fourscore and two years after the return from the Babylonian captivity, Nehem. i. &c.

3672 The Jews in subjection to Alexander the Great, whilst he was in those parts of the world, pursuing his conquest of the Persians, two hundred and four years after their return from the Babylonian captivity, into their own country; and three hundred and thirty-two years before Christ.

The building of the anti-temple on mount Gerizim in Samaria, with Alexander's leave, according to Usher,

*Affairs of the Persians.**Affairs of the Jews.*

occasioned a great schism in the Jewish church. [But Dean Prideaux places it above seventy years before this, under Darius Nothus.]

3681 Alexander the Great died at Babylon, seven years after his conquest over the Persians.

*Affairs of the Egyptians and Syrians.**Affairs of the Jews.*

3684 After Alexander's death, his generals seizing on the several parts of his empire, Ptolemy Soter, who had gotten Egypt, made himself master of Judea.

3684 The Jews in subjection to the kings of Egypt, about three hundred and twenty years before Christ.

3806 Antiochus the Great, king of Syria, prevailing in his wars against the Egyptians, the Jews rendered themselves to him.

3806 The Jews one hundred and twenty years afterwards become subject to the Syrians.

3834 They are grievously oppressed by Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria; three hundred and sixty-six years after their return from the Babylonian captivity; and one hundred and seventy years before Christ.

3838 The Maccabees (descended from one of their priestly families) their deliverers; one hundred and sixty-six years before Christ.

[Note, *That they were governed by the same family of the Maccabees successively, till their subjection to the Romans.*]

3941 The Jews brought under subjection to the Romans by Pompey, one of the Roman generals, (after having been governed by their own countrymen, the Maccabees, somewhat above one hundred years,) sixty-three years before Christ.

3964 Herod the Great (an Idumean, but of the Jewish religion) declared by the Romans the king of the Jews, forty years before the birth of Christ.

3966 Herod, about two or three years after he was declared king of Judea, with the assistance of Socius, the Roman general, besieged and took Jerusalem with a very great slaughter of the Jews; and Antigonus, the last reigning prince of the Maccabees, being beheaded, Herod became fully established in the kingdom of Judea.

3996 The temple of Jerusalem, having been much decayed, was, in nine years and a half, repaired, or rather rebuilt, by Herod, and finished eight years before Christ.

4000 } Jesus Christ our Lord born in the world.
4004 }

Herod the Great died about a year and a quarter after Christ's nativity. His dominions were divided among three of his sons: of which Archelaus had Judea and Samaria; and Herod Antipas, Galilee; Philip had Trachonitis, and other countries beyond Jordan, north-eastward.

Roman Emperors.	Years of Christ.	Judea and Samaria.	Galilee.	Affairs of Christianity.
Augustus. 40.	6	Archelaus governed Judea and Samaria. Archelaus is banished; and his dominions being made a province subject to that of Syria, governors are sent by the Romans into Judea. The fifth of which was	Herod Antipas governed Galilee; and continued in that station till sometime after Christ's death: he is called in Scripture, Herod the Tetrarch, Matt. xiv. 1. but most commonly Herod.	
Tiberius.	12			Our Lord at 12 years of age at Jerusalem among the doctors.
	14	Pontius Pilate.		Joseph, husband to the Virgin Mary, dies.
	26			John Baptist begins to preach.
	28			This period St. Mark calls, <i>The beginning of the Gospel.</i>
	29			Our Lord is baptized, and enters upon his public ministry, and works miracles in Galilee; and at the first passover after his baptism goes to Jerusalem, and also into other parts of Judea and Samaria.
	30			Christ's second passover after his baptism. He more and more manifests himself by preaching and working miracles.
	31			Christ's third passover after his baptism.
	32			John Baptist beheaded.
	33			Christ's fourth and last passover. He is crucified, arises again, and ascends up into heaven.
	34			The Holy Ghost is sent down. The first establishment of the Christian Church.
Caligula.	35			St. Stephen stoned, and the church persecuted.
	36			St. Paul converted as he was going to Damascus.
	37	Pilate deprived of his government, and Marcellus in his room.		
	38		Herod Antipas, or the Tetrarch, is ba-	

Roman Emperors.	Years of Christ.	Judea and Samaria.	Galilee.	Affairs of Christianity.
			nished: his government is bestowed on Herod Agrippa, a grandson of Herod the Great.	
		Judea, Samaria, Galilee.		
Claudius.	40			
	41	Herod Agrippa is confirmed in his government of Galilee by the emperor Claudius, who also added Judea and Samaria to his kingdom: so he is called Herod the king, Acts xii. as being now king of all Palestine, or the Jewish country.		The Gentiles owned to have an interest in Christ, in a vision to Peter. Cornelius converted.
	44	Herod Agrippa is smitten by an angel, and dies miserably; upon which the Roman emperor again sends governors into Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. Cuspius Fadus, governor.		Herod Agrippa persecutes the church. St. James the Great beheaded by his command; but Peter delivered.
	45			The persecution ceases, and the Christian church flourishes. The apostles disperse themselves to preach the Gospel in several parts of the world.
	46	Tiberius Alexander, governor.		Paul and Barnabus being chosen, at Antioch in Syria, the apostles of the Gentiles, begin their circuit, and preach at Cyprus, and in the Lesser Asia.
	47			They return to Antioch, and give an account of their success.
	48	Cumanus, governor.		
	49			They go to Jerusalem to the council.
	51			Paul, being separated from Barnabas, travels into Europe, and plants the Gospel in Greece, chiefly at Thessalonica and Corinth.
	53	Fœlix, governor.		
		Agrippa, the younger, son to Herod Agrippa above mentioned, obtains the dominions formerly belonging to Philip, and other countries lying north-eastward of Galilee and Jordan. To which afterwards was added some part of Galilee. He is called King Agrippa, Acts xxv.		
Nero.	54			St. Paul settles a church at Ephesus.

Roman Emperors.	Years of Christ.	Judea, Samaria, Galilee.	Affairs of Christianity.
	58		He goes the last time to Jerusalem, and is arraigned before Felix, who detained him prisoner two years at Cæsarea, the residence of the Roman governors.
	60	Festus, governor.	St. Paul before Festus and king Agrippa at Cæsarea.
	61	Judea and Samaria.	Galilee.
	62	Albinus, governor.	St. Paul's first imprisonment at Rome.
	63		[Here ends the history of the Acts of the Apostles.]
	64	Florus, governor.	St. Paul is released, and travels up and down planting the Gospel in the western parts.
	66	The Jewish war breaks out, which at length proved their ruin.	The first general persecution under Nero.
	67		
	68		St. Paul at his second coming to Rome is apprehended with St. Peter.
Galba. Otho. Vitellius Vespasian. }	69		St. Peter and St. Paul both martyred at Rome.
	70	The daily sacrifice ceases, Jerusalem is taken, and burnt by the Roman army, whereby an end is put to the Jewish state, a little above fifteen hundred years after their first settlement in Canaan, six hundred and two years after their return from the Babylonian captivity, and thirty-seven years after Christ's crucifixion.	

It may be proper, for the use of some readers, to signify the state and office in the Christian church of the few primitive Fathers herein quoted, and the time when they flourished; and for the ease of others, the editions made use of.

Years of Christ.

- 100 **IGNATIUS**, Bishop of Antioch in Syria. Englished by Archbishop Wake. Compared with the Greek of Vossius. Edit. 2. London. 1680.
- 140 **JUSTIN MARTYR**, a Christian Apologist. Apol. I. Grabe. Oxon. 1700. Trypho. Jebb. Lond. 1719.
- 179 **IRENEUS**, Bishop of Lyons in France. Grabe. Oxon. 1702.
- 192 **TERTULLIAN**, Presbyter at Carthage in Africa. Rigaltii, Paris, 1634.
- 398 **CHRYSOSTOM**, Bishop of Constantinople. Latin, Antwerp, 1614. compared with the Savilian edition.
- 400 **JEROME**, Presbyter. Much conversant in Palestine, or in the Holy Land. Erasmus. Paris, 1534.
- 400 **AUGUSTIN**, Bishop of Hippo in Africa. Basil. 1543.

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FINIS.

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